Sub-State Unconventional Warfare: Expanding United States Military Political Options

A Monograph

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Abstract

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Aggressive occupying powers that adopt characteristics and responsibilities of states currently abound throughout the world. Sub-state unconventional warfare is a viable policy option if strategic planners determine a potential to work with and through an indigenous underground, auxiliary, and guerrillas to coerce, disrupt, or overthrow occupying powers or non-state actors. Sub-state unconventional warfare must be scaled and tailored specifically to the operational environment, and when applied judiciously, can be utilized to oppose occupying powers like the Russian military in Transnistria, Crimea, Abkhazia, South Ossetia, or Nagorno Karabakh, to combat non-state actors like ISIL in Iraq, Syria, and Libya by harnessing disenfranchised populations.

Contents

Acronyms

ARVN   Army of the Republic of Vietnam

ATP   Army Techniques Publication

CIA   Central Intelligence Agency

CIDG   Civilian Irregular Defense Group

COIN   Counterinsurgency

CORDS   Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development Support

COSVN   Central Office for South Vietnam

DRVN   Democratic Republic of Vietnam

FARC   Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia

FID   Foreign Internal Defense

FM   Field Manual

GVN   Government of South Vietnam

ICP   Indochinese Communist Party

ISIL   Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant

JUWTF   Joint Unconventional Warfare Task Force

KMT   Kuomintang

MACV-SOG   Military Assistance Command Vietnam – Studies and Observations Group

NLF   National Front for the Liberation of South Vietnam

NVA   North Vietnamese Army

OSS   Office of Strategic Services

PRP   People's Revolutionary Party

PRU   Provincial Reconnaissance Units

SF   Special Forces

SOF   Special Operations Forces

TC   Training Circular

US   United States

USSF   United States Army Special Forces

UW   Unconventional Warfare

VC   Viet Cong

VCI   Viet Cong Infrastructure

Figures

Introduction

The US military has applied unconventional warfare (UW) as an economy of force operation in peripheral campaigns within the context of a large conventional war, as support to insurgencies to overthrow foreign governments, and to oppose foreign occupying powers in nations unable to control and defend sovereign territory. The common thread that links these three approaches of UW is the application of military force with and through a population indigenous to the operational environment. Economy of force efforts, and support to insurgencies to overthrow hostile governments have been covered extensively due to a plethora of historical examples. However, the opposition of foreign occupying forces in nations with fragmented or segmented sovereignty through a sub-state UW approach is a poorly understood military phenomenon.

West's Encyclopedia of Legal Terms provides a strict definition of an occupying power:

Military occupation occurs when a belligerent state invades the territory of another state with the intention of holding the territory at least temporarily. While hostilities continue, the occupying state is prohibited by International Law from annexing the territory or creating another state out of it, but… may establish some form of military administration over the territory and the population.[1]

This definition narrowly describes military occupation in terms of traditional state against state military conflict, but does not describe current realities. Presently, occupying powers that adopt characteristics and responsibilities of states abound throughout the world. Hezbollah, Hamas, ISIL, and the Taliban in the Middle East, the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC) in South America, and Russian separatists in Ukraine are just a few of these occupying forces who have annexed territory and are operating as quasi-states.[2] Sub-state UW is a viable

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[1] *West's Encyclopedia of American Law*, ed. 2, s.v. "occupying power," accessed March 1, 2016. http://legal-dictionary.thefreedictionary.com/Occupying+power.

[2] David S. Maxwell, "Why Does Special Forces Train and Educate for Unconventional Warfare? Why is it Important?" *Small Wars Journal* (April 2010): 2-3.

policy option if strategic planners determine a potential to work with and through an indigenous underground, auxiliary, and guerrillas to coerce, disrupt, or overthrow occupying powers or non-state actors.

The primary research question of this monograph is if sub-state UW is a viable policy option. Three secondary questions must also be answered: Is there an adequate theoretical basis to support a sub-state approach? Is there a historical precedent for sub-state UW, and if so, what elements of UW, revolutionary war, guerrilla warfare, etc… have been incorporated to implement such a political military strategy? Which dependent variables must be present to implement sub-state UW? Research was conducted on the assumption that the ramifications of the current doctrinal definition of UW are not fully appreciated nor understood. Furthermore, this monograph assumes a whole of government UW effort, even though this work focuses mainly on interagency relationships between US civilian leadership, the US Army, Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), and United States Army Special Forces (USSF).

This monograph assesses current UW doctrine of the US Army Special Forces and joint doctrine. The study will study the phenomenon of UW, also described variously as guerrilla warfare, partisan war, revolutionary warfare, people's protracted war, civil war, partisan warfare, political warfare, and counterinsurgency (COIN). This study will also focus on the different applications of UW throughout history from General George Washington's use of New Jersey partisans during the Forage War of 1777 to the Vietnam War and Bay of Pigs.

This review will establish historical continuities of UW, and demonstrate the conceptual blending of UW military theory when adapted to specific environmental conditions. This process will answer the three secondary questions by demonstrating an adequate theoretical basis supportive of sub-state UW, delineating dependent variables necessary to successfully implement sub-state UW, and study both a successful implementation of sub-state UW and a failure to execute UW to demonstrate the accuracy and viability of the dependent variables selected.

Sub-state UW is substantiated as a viable political military option by answering the three secondary questions of this monograph to provide a theory of action. It is the intent that this theory of action is descriptive rather than prescriptive because doctrinal purism is ill suited for facing complex, evolving adversaries within the current strategic operational environment. "Doctrine can be used to train, prepare, and guide but it is effective strategy with campaign plans for implementation that are required to achieve objectives in the national interest."[3] Proposing a sub-state UW framework facilitates a greater appreciation for the possibilities of the approach to oppose foreign occupying forces in nations with fragmented or segmented sovereignty like the Russian military in frozen conflict areas on their periphery, and against non-state actors like ISIL, the Taliban, and the FARC, among many others.

Literature Review

The term "unconventional warfare" is often conflated to describe guerrilla warfare, partisan war, revolutionary warfare, people's protracted war, civil war, counterinsurgency (COIN), or difficult tactical operations. There are many available sources on each of these topics, and there are detailed studies that put each subject into historical context. These sources include books, journal articles, research and analysis studies, and military doctrinal manuals. The literature review demonstrates the difficult and ongoing nature of the UW debate occurring inside the Special Operations Forces (SOF) community, within United States political and military circles, and among military practitioners and civilian scholars around the world.

Current UW doctrine is located in Joint Publication (JP) 3-05, *Special Operations* (2014); US Army Field Manual (FM) 3-05, *Army Special Operations* (2014); US Army Techniques Publication (ATP) 3-05.1, *Unconventional Warfare* (2013); and US Army Training Circular (TC) 18-01, *Special Forces Unconventional Warfare* (2011). All use the current joint definition for

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[3] Maxwell, "Special Forces," 2.

UW, which is "operations and activities that are conducted to enable a resistance movement or insurgency to coerce, disrupt, or overthrow a government or occupying power by operating through or with an underground, auxiliary and guerrilla force in a denied area."[4]

Four illustrative doctrinal documents on the subject of unconventional warfare operational approaches are Field Manual (FM) 31-21, *Guerrilla Warfare and Special Forces Operations* (1961); FM 31-20, *Special Forces Operational Techniques* (1965); FM 31-21; *Special Forces Operations* (1969); and FM 31-20, *Special Forces Operational Techniques* (1971). FM 31-21, and FM 31-20 (1965) perceived UW operations as economy of force efforts within the context of a larger conventional military campaign, and/or as support to an insurgency to overthrow a foreign government. "Unconventional warfare consists of the interrelated fields of guerrilla warfare, evasion and escape, and subversion against hostile states (resistance). Unconventional warfare operations are conducted in enemy or enemy controlled territory by predominately indigenous personnel usually supported and directed in varying degrees by an external source."[5] FM 31-21, and FM 31-20 (1965) collated US military experiences from World War II and the Korean War specifically elucidating UW method and purpose.

FM 31-21 (1969), and FM 31-20 (1971) incorporated US military experiences from Vietnam into doctrine. The UW definition did not change significantly, but one begins to see the move towards the current definition of UW with an inclusion of the concepts of control and influence in describing what UW consists of, and how it is applied, in FM 31-21 (1969). "Unconventional warfare consists of military, political, psychological, or economic actions of a covert, clandestine, or overt nature within areas under the actual or potential control or influence

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[4] Joint Publication (JP) 3-05, S*pecial Operations* (Washington DC: US Government Printing Office, 2014), xi.

[5] Field Manual (FM) 31-21, *Guerrilla Warfare and Special Forces Operations* (Washington DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1961), 3.

of a force or state whose interests and objectives are inimical to those of the United States."[6] The

phrase "areas under the actual or potential control or influence of a force or state whose interests

are inimical to the United States,"[7] is condensed in the current definition as an "occupying

power."[8] Both refer to the third purpose for UW; i.e. the opposition of foreign military occupation

forces in a nation unable to control and defend their territory, or sub-state UW. The Vietnam War

shaped and expanded US perceptions of UW, meriting doctrinal expansion, however this

approach remains unappreciated because the historical precedent is confined to the Vietnam War.

UW as an environmental shaping effort within a larger conventional campaign has been

implemented throughout history. T.E. Lawrence's *Twenty-Seven Articles* written in 1917, and

Seven Pillars of Wisdom, published in 1922, described Lawrence's experiences as a British

military liaison during the Arab Revolt of 1916-1918 within the World War I context. Colonel

Aaron Bank's *From OSS to Green Beret: The Birth of Special* Forces, published in 1986 detailing

Office of Strategic Service (OSS) support to resistance efforts in France, the Netherlands,

Belgium, the Balkans, and China during World War II is an autobiographical account of the first

10th Special Forces Group commander. Richard Dunlop's *Behind Japanese Lines: With the OSS*

in Burma published in 2014 illuminated OSS Detachment 101's support to Kachin tribesman in

the China-Burma-India theater against the Japanese Army during World War II. *White Tigers: My*

Secret War in North Korea by Ben Malcolm, published in 2003, detailed US support to North

Korean partisans during the Korean War. Bernard Fall's *Hell in a Very Small Place: The Siege of*

Dien Bien Phu, published in 1966 covered General Vo Nguyen Giap's combination of guerrilla

warfare with mobile and positional warfare, utilizing conventional and guerrilla forces during the

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[6] FM 31-21, S*pecial Forces Operations* (Washington DC: US Government Printing Office, 1969), 3-1.

[7] Ibid.

[8] JP 3-05, S*pecial Operations*, xi.

First Indochina War. *Victory at Any Cost: The Genius of Viet Nam's Gen. Vo Nguyen Giap*, by

Cecil B. Currey published in 1997, described General Giap's application of UW as an economy

of force both during the First Indochina War, and the Vietnam War.

There are many books available on the subject of UW in the form of support to an

insurgency to overthrow hostile governments, however many are biased negatively and fail to

adequately place these efforts within context. This negative bias results from the fact that most of

these writers are CIA and military outsiders, and therefore equate secrecy with sinister intent.

John Prados' *Lost Crusader: The Secret Wars of CIA Director William Colby*, published in 2003,

examined the OSS' genesis during World War II, the formation of the CIA and USSF after the

dissolution of the OSS through CIA involvement in Vietnam by chronicling William Colby's

career. John Prados also published *Safe for Democracy: The Secret Wars of the CIA* in 2006,

which recounted US efforts to execute foreign policy objectives through paramilitary operations

throughout the history of the CIA. Prados detailed US activities in Europe after World War II, the

1953 Iranian coup d'état to overthrow Prime Minster Mosaddegh, the 1954 Guatemalan coup

d'état to overthrow Jacobo Arbenz, the 1961 Bay of Pigs Invasion, among other operations. Bob

Woodward's *Veil: The Secret Wars of the CIA: 1981-1987*, published in 1987, detailed CIA

operations executed during the Reagan administration, focusing on the Iran-Contra affair.

Scrutinizing the theorists and practitioners who have applied UW to depose a regime is

just as instructive as analyzing US utilization of UW with and through indigenous populations to

coerce, disrupt, or overthrow governments throughout history. This application of UW is also

described as guerrilla warfare, or as people's protracted war. The Spanish guerrillas who fought

in the Peninsular War of 1807-1814 were the realization of what was possible through guerrilla

warfare. Over a century later, Mao Zedong developed people's protracted war, applying guerrilla

warfare within a three-phased system to defeat the Chinese Kuomintang (KMT) during the

Chinese Civil War. Michael Lynch's *The Chinese Civil War: 1945-1949*, published in 2010 focused on culminating events of that conflict.

Prior to 1808, most English speakers understood *guerrilla*, to mean "little war." The term had been used to describe skirmishes between small detachments of opposing conventional armies.[9] However, it was during the Peninsular War of 1807-1814, detailed in John L. Tone's *The Fatal Knot*, published in 1994, that the term was transformed, entering the military lexicon to carry a familiar meaning. Guerrilla war came to mean a war fought by irregulars against foreign occupation.[10] Guerrillas eliminated collaboration between the Spanish and French in rural areas by controlling, coercing, or manipulating the native population. French inability to obtain Spanish collaboration had the second order effect of confining the French occupation to urban areas, and the third order effects of reducing the amount of Spanish land available to the French for foraging, increasing strains on French food supplies.[11] Napoleon Bonaparte described the Peninsular War after his removal from power saying, "That unfortunate war destroyed me; it divided my forces, multiplied my obligations, undermined my morale… All the circumstances of my disasters are bound up in that fatal knot."[12] Robert Taber's *War of the Flea: The Classic Study of Guerrilla Warfare*, published in 1965, brought guerrilla warfare into the 20th century by exploring its utilization during the Cuban Revolution, Chinese Civil War, First Indochina War, Vietnam War, and by examining theorists Che Guevara, Vo Nguyen Giap, and Mao Zedong.

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[9] Ian F. W. Beckett, *Encyclopedia of Guerrilla Warfare* (New York: Checkmark Books, 2001), xi-xiii.

[10] John L. Tone, *The Fatal Knot* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1994), 4.

[11] Joseph B. White and Isidoro de Antillón y Marzo, *Semanario Patriotico,* (July 27, 1809).

[12] Tone, *The Fatal Knot*, 3.

Mao Zedong intuitively accepted that the partisan rural revolution against the Chinese KMT would take time to build and that patience was paramount, calling the approach *people's protracted war*.[13] Twenty-nine years passed from when Mao Zedong co-founded the Chinese Communist Party in 1921 until the Chinese People's Liberation Army occupied Beijing, and forced the Chinese KMT Nationalists to Taiwan in 1950.[14] Throughout that time, Mao developed and refined protracted war theory and doctrine through both application and study, including an examination of the Peninsular War. Mao recognized parallels between the Spanish partisans who had defeated Napoleon's army, and the rural Chinese population who fought the Kuomintang.[15] After this examination, Mao identified three critical phases through which the revolution must pass before final victory could be achieved, describing the approach in 1938 in a series of speeches called *On Protracted War*. The three phases of Mao's protracted war were the *strategic defensive*, the *stalemate*, and the *strategic offensive.*[16]

The *strategic defensive* phase involves the creation and organization of the political party with the revolutionaries developing a political cadre to recruit members and form attachments to the population. During the *stalemate* phase, insurgents increase their base of support through attacks on local incumbent leadership and gain control over villages in remote and inaccessible areas creating safe havens. Guerrilla units are formed from the established base of support with the population link crucial during this phase. Revolutionaries who cannot maintain access to the population cannot extend their span of control and will likely be defeated. Guerrillas increase

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[13] Mao Zedong, *Selected Works of Mao Zedong*, 2nd ed. (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1967), 113.

[14] Russell Crandall, *America's Dirty Wars: Irregular Warfare from 1776 to the War on Terror* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 157-162.

[15] Mao Zedong, *On Guerrilla Warfare* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2000), 10.

[16] Crandall, *America's Dirty Wars*, 161.

attacks against district-level government and conduct ambushes on vulnerable security forces. In the *strategic offensive* phase, the revolution forms conventional maneuver units at battalion, regiment, and division level, initiating open warfare with government military forces. Insurgent lines of communication are established at the provincial level, and a regional command structure emplaced to coordinate large-scale operations. The efforts of each phase reinforce earlier activities to create an irresistible wave of momentum to topple the ruling regime.[17]

Sub-state UW utilized by the US military to oppose an occupying power within a state unable to control and defend its territory through an indigenous resistance was an approach unique to the Vietnam War. At first glance, US involvement in the Soviet-Afghan War from 1979-1989 appears similar in that US efforts enabled the Afghan mujahideen to oppose Soviet military occupation. However, during that war, the mujahideen were an insurgency dedicated to the overthrow of the pro-Soviet Afghan government. Afghan mujahideen attacked the Soviet military to isolate and overthrow the Afghan government by eliminating Soviet support. Robert Kaplan's *Soldiers of God: With Islamic Warriors in Afghanistan and Pakistan*, published in 1990, *The Soviet Afghan War: How a Superpower Fought and Lost*, edited by Lester Grau, and published in 2002, and Steve Coll's *Ghost Wars*, published in 2004, clarified mujahideen interim objectives, reconciling them with ultimate insurgent aspirations.

During the Vietnam War, the US employed a UW approach to disrupt North Vietnamese use of the Ho Chi Minh trail, and deny sanctuary in Laos. Major Dean S. Newman wrote a historical analysis on "Operation White Star: A UW Operation Against an Insurgency," featured in *Special Warfare* in 2005, describing US efforts to oppose North Vietnamese occupation in Laos by supporting Laotian tribesman. In the article, Major Newman did not highlight that the Laotian government was unable to exert sovereignty, thus necessitating Operation White Star;

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[17] Andrew F. Krepinevich, *The Army and Vietnam* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986), 7-8.

however this logic is implied and does not require explicit disclosure. David Maxwell's master's thesis, *Special Forces Missions: A Return to the Roots for a Vision of the Future*, described Special Forces (SF) and CIA efforts during Operation White Star as a COIN effort, because Maxwell determined the enemy was the Pathet Lao insurgency, rather than the North Vietnamese Army (NVA). Both Newman and Maxwell are correct in their assessments, because SF and CIA efforts went both to support the Royal Laotian Army's opposition of the Pathet Lao insurgency, thus COIN, and to the Hmong and Yao tribesmen to conduct guerrilla warfare against the NVA, an occupying force, or UW. Operation White Star is illustrative of the sometimes contradictory or complimentary conclusions at which individuals arrive when analyzing UW.

Major Derek Jones' master's thesis entitled *Ending the Debate: Unconventional Warfare, Foreign Internal Defense, and Why Words Matter*, postulated a binary relationship between UW and Foreign Internal Defense (FID), directly correlating FID with COIN, in an attempt to clarify definitions and relationships. Major Jones did not recognize the sub-state UW effort in Vietnam, labeling SF and CIA Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development Support (CORDS) efforts, "a low-visibility counterinsurgency program, thus a foreign internal defense."[18] Steven P. Basilici and Jeremy Simmons master's thesis entitled *Transformation: A Bold Case for Unconventional Warfare* discussed the concept of sub-state conflict, but not sub-state UW. Basilici and Simmons proposed that there are specific preconditions and principles required to conduct UW to demonstrate UW was a viable military political option. *Transformation* suggested that COIN could be implemented through UW, applying the posited preconditions and principles to two case studies, which were SF and CIA Civilian Irregular Defense Group (CIDG) UW efforts to counter Viet Cong (VC) influence and control in South Vietnam, and the COIN operation in El Salvador

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[18] Derek Jones, "Ending the Debate: Unconventional Warfare, Foreign Internal Defense, and Why Words Matter" (master's thesis, Command and General Staff College, Ft. Leavenworth, KS, 2006), 69.

to oppose the Farabundo Marti Liberation Front. CIDG was a program within CORDS; therefore, Basilici and Simmons contradict Major Jones by labeling CORDS in Vietnam UW vice FID.

In *Systems Thinking Managing Chaos and Complexity: A Platform for Designing Business Architecture* published in 2006, organizational theorist Jamshid Gharajedaghi proposed, "A fallacy has dominated the treatment of opposing tendencies as a duality in a zero-sum game. Everything seems to come in a pair of opposites: security/freedom; order/complexity; collectivity/individuality; modernity/tradition; art/science; and so on."[19] "The principle of *multidimensionality* maintains that the opposing tendencies not only coexist and interact, but also form a complementary relationship."[20] Major Derek Jones' juxtaposition of UW and FID in an attempt to define each and demonstrate a natural transition point between the two military approaches did not account for the principle of multidimensionality, and the natural blending that may occur when conducting COIN and/or UW military operations.

Sub-state UW is the application of military power with and through an indigenous force to oppose a foreign occupying power in a nation unable to control and defend sovereign territory. This approach may appear a blending of UW with COIN, and to a degree it is, however the object of the sub-state UW approach is to oppose an occupying power. There are three dependent variables to implement sub-state UW. These dependent variables are the segmentation or fragmentation of sovereignty within a nation-state, a supportive political context, and a viable indigenous partner force.

Political scientist Stathis Kalyvas introduced the concept of segmentation and fragmentation of sovereignty in *The Logic of Violence in Civil War*, published in 2006. Kalyvas

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[19] Jamshid Gharajedaghi, *Systems Thinking, Managing Chaos and Complexity: A Platform for Designing Business Architecture* (Oxford: Elsevier, 2006), 38.

[20] Ibid., 39.

described the phenomenon as when "territory is divided into zones monopolistically controlled by rival actors (segmentation) and zones where these actors' sovereignty overlaps (fragmentation). The type of sovereignty or control that prevails in a given region affects the type of strategies followed by political actors."[21] Kalyvas went on to illustrate how competing incumbent and insurgent factions "try to shape popular support (or collaboration) and deter collaboration with their rival… control is increasingly likely to shape collaboration because political actors who enjoy substantial territorial control can protect civilians… The rival actors are therefore left with little choice but to use violence as a means to shape collaboration. The use of violence is bounded by the nature of sovereignty exercised by each political actor."[22] Segmentation of sovereignty occurs when actors divide territory into zones where a single dominant actor monopolizes the use of violence. Fragmentation of sovereignty occurs when rival actors exercise degrees of control through violence in territorial zones where sovereignty overlaps, or is contested. Sovereignty is fragmented or segmented when two or more principles vie for control of a geographic region utilizing violence to oppose one another, and to exert control over the populace.

In *Problems of Strategy in China's Revolutionary War*, Mao Zedong described context in 1936 as "the different laws for directing different wars [that] are determined by the different circumstances of those wars—differences in their time, place, and nature… In studying the laws for directing wars that occur at different historical stages, that differ in nature and that are waged in different places and by different nations, we must fix our attention on the characteristics and development of each, and must oppose a mechanical approach to the problem of war."[23] Mao described differences in context between wars in terms of time, place, and nature to demonstrate

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[21] Stathis N. Kalyvas, *The Logic of Violence in Civil War* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 12.

[22] Ibid.

[23] Mao Zedong, *Problems of Strategy in China's Revolutionary War* (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1965), 2.

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that a military approach to one conflict cannot be mechanically applied to another. The natural tendency may be to contend that Mao's description was formulated with respect to warfare, and therefore should be narrowly applied. However, Prussian military theorist Carl von Clausewitz stated in *On War* edited and translated by Michael Howard and Peter Paret in 1976 that "when whole communities go to war—whole peoples, and especially *civilized* peoples—the reason always lies in some political situation, and the occasion is always due to some political object. War therefore, is an act of policy."[24] Thus, Mao Zedong's description of context in terms of time, place, and nature is also applicable to politics, or to what Mao called "war without bloodshed."[25]

Time, place, and nature are the three facets within the second dependent variable of a supportive political context for sub-state UW. In 1965, Robert Taber elaborated on the concept of a supportive *time* for insurrection in *War of the Flea: The Classic Study of Guerrilla Warfare.* Taber wrote, "Insurrection is a phenomenon, revolution a process, which cannot begin until the historical stage has been set for it."[26] Martin Van Creveld addressed the concept of *place* in his essay "Technology and War II: Postmodern War?" published as part of the *Oxford History of Modern War* edited by Charles Townsend. Van Creveld postulated that when modern powers engaged in what he called *subconventional war*, irregular forces often defeat those powers. Van Creveld advanced this logic utilizing the Vietnam War, the Soviet Afghan War, and Israeli military action in Lebanon as three case studies. Van Creveld demonstrated that a physical environment could enable an unconventional force to triumph over a more powerful conventional military because UW often occurs in places without well-developed infrastructure. Long,

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[24] Carl von Clausewitz, *On* War, ed. and trans. Michael Howard and Peter Paret (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976), 86-87.

[25] Mao Zedong, *Selected Works*, 152-153.

[26] Robert Taber, *War of the Flea: The Classic Study of Guerrilla Warfare* (Washington DC: Potomac Books, 1965), 22.

unprotected lines of communication cede military initiative to the opposition and manufacture vulnerability.[27] The third facet of a supportive political context for sub-state UW is *nature.* Van Creveld illustrated the concept of nature by describing the act of dropping a bomb that missed its target, juxtaposing the ramifications of that action within the context of a conventional war and an unconventional war. The act of dropping a bomb and missing a target has little second and third order effects within a conventional war, while the same act of dropping a bomb and missing a target has enormous ramifications within an unconventional conflict among the people. When faced with *subconventional* war, the military must contend with terrain, the enemy, and the population, while during conventional war, population is a minor consideration.

The addition of population as a factor during warfare creates what Emile Simpson described as a kaleidoscopic environment in *War from the Ground Up: Twenty First Century Combat as Politics*, published in 2013. "Where force is used within a fragmented political environment, it creates new enemies… not necessarily linked to any state. The essential feature… is that violence is not bound within the bilateral, polarised conception of two states at war; it has unpredictable and often tragic political outputs."[28]

A viable indigenous partner force is the third dependent variable for sub-state UW. In *War of the Flea*, Robert Taber described guerrilla war as revolutionary war, or "the extension of politics by means of armed conflict."[29] Tying violence to political objectives is a critical component of UW, because without a political object, violence becomes meaningless. Milton Finley detailed the negative consequences associated with violent acts disconnected from political objectives in *The Most Monstrous of Wars: The Napoleonic Guerrilla War in Southern Italy,*

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[27] Martin Van Creveld, "Technology and War II; Postmodern War?" in *Oxford History of Modern War,* ed. Charles Townsend (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 304.

[28] Emile Simpson, *War From the Ground Up: Twenty First Century Combat as Politics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 85.

[29] Taber, *War of the Flea*, 16.

1806-1811, published in 1994, describing Calabrian violence that descended into brigandage. According to Taber, the guerrilla "wishes to wear down his military opponent and will employ suitable tactics to that end, but his primary objective is political. It is to feed and fan the fires of revolution by his struggle, to raise the entire population against the regime… and cause its disintegration… Thus we may paraphrase Clausewitz: Guerrilla war is the extension of politics by means of armed conflict."[30] A viable indigenous partner force is capable of exhausting the opposition, and connects violence with political objectives to gain and maintain popular support.

Review of the literature indicates there are no sources that address sub-state UW as a theoretical construct or as a military option. Two case studies confirm or deny that three dependent variables of sub-state UW are segmentation or fragmentation of sovereignty, a supportive political context, and a viable indigenous partner force. These case studies were SF and CIA efforts with and through the Provincial Reconnaissance Units (PRU) during the Vietnam War, and SF and CIA efforts with and through Brigade 2506 during the Bay of Pigs.

Mark Moyar's *Phoenix and the Birds of Prey: Counterinsurgency and Counterterrorism in Vietnam*, published in 1997, and Douglas Valentine's *The Phoenix Program*, published in 1990, covered the creation, rise, and fall of the Phoenix program with significant chapters devoted to the PRU, a program within Phoenix. Dale Andrade's *Ashes to Ashes: The Phoenix Program and the Vietnam War*, published in 1990, provided an objective analysis of Phoenix, establishing that much of the impugning myth surrounding the program was unwarranted. Andrade produced one of the first positive assessments of Phoenix driven by fact rather than fabrication, detailing individual PRU operations, and demonstrating that South Vietnamese structural flaws were responsible for accusations of extra legality. Stuart Herrington's *Stalking the Vietcong: Inside Operation Phoenix: A Personal Account*, published in 1982 contributed a

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[30] Taber, *War of the Flea*, 16.

first person narrative from a military intelligence officer who sought to tout the Phoenix program's success and effectiveness. Herrington focused on Hau Nghia Province in South Vietnam, and established the VC as a shadow organization who exerted control through violence. William Rosenau's RAND study, *Subversion and Insurgency* detailed National Liberation Front (NLF) subversion during the Vietnam War through the VC *binh van* or proselytizing program in order to increase and consolidate control over the South Vietnamese populace.

Thomas Ahern's *CIA and Rural Pacification in South Vietnam,* a slightly redacted recently declassified analysis, provided a holistic perspective of CIA activities in South Vietnam, positioning Phoenix within a host of other programs. Andrew Krepenevich's *The Army and Vietnam,* published in 1986, focused on COIN development as a core SF mission during the Vietnam War, providing strategic political context and an analysis of SF and CIA PRU efforts. Thomas Adams' *US Special Operations Forces in Action: The Challenge of Unconventional Warfare*, published in 1998 is a detailed study in the history and development of the USSF and UW as a political military option that places SF and CIA PRU efforts into historical context.

LTG Ken Tovo's master's thesis "From the Ashes of Phoenix: Lessons For Contemporary Counterinsurgency Operations" focused on the neutralization of an insurgency's infrastructure, explicitly suggesting that the Phoenix program may be an exemplar for both the positive results associated with such a political military approach, and how to avoid negative ramifications. *The Phoenix Program and Contemporary Counterinsurgency,* a RAND study by William Rosenau and Austin Long separates the Phoenix program into two concomitant parts, *Phoenix*, an intelligence-sharing program, and the PRU, the action arm against the VC shadow government. The study sought to bring the conceptual approach forward in order to inform future military options to counter occupying powers or insurgencies.

The Bay of Pigs, by Howard Jones, published in 2008, portrayed CIA and SF activities in an even-handed manner, placing much of the blame for operational failure at the feet of President

John F. Kennedy. Grayston Lynch's *Decision for Disaster: Betrayal at the Bay of Pigs,* published in 1998 provided a first-person perspective from the former CIA case officer aboard Brigade 2506's command ship during the Bay of Pigs Invasion. Lynch led the first combat team ashore, communicated directly with Washington DC, and dealt with the aftermath of President Kennedy's decision to deny significant air support to Brigade 2506. Jim Rasenberger's *The Brilliant Disaster: JFK, Castro, and America's Doomed Invasion of Cuba's Bay of Pigs,* published in 2011, and Peter Wyden's *Bay of Pigs: The Untold Story* published in 1979 are detailed strategic policy analyses of the events leading up to, during, and after the Bay of Pigs. *Operation Zapata: The "Ultrasensitive" Report and Testimony of the Board of Inquiry on the Bay of Pigs,* compiled and published in 1981 by Paul Kesaris, detailed the Paramilitary Study Group meetings after the Bay of Pigs. *Bay of Pigs Declassified: The Secret CIA Report on the Invasion of Cuba,* edited by Peter Kornbluh, published in 1998 is the declassified report written by the CIA Inspector General (IG) on the CIA's attempt to overthrow Castro.

Russell Crandall's *America's Dirty Wars:Irregular Warfare from 1776 To the War On Terror,* published in 2014 is a detailed historical study on the theory, development, and utilization of UW by revolutionaries, militaries, insurgents, and counter-insurgents. There are significant discussions devoted to the Cuban Revolution, the Bay of Pigs, and to Che Guevara. *Perilous Options: Special Operations as an Instrument of Foreign Policy*, by Lucien S. Vandenbroucke, published in 1993, selected four *coups de main*: the Bay of Pigs Invasion, the Sontay raid in North Vietnam, the Mayaquez operation, and the Iran hostage rescue mission, identifying common components to understand why these particular operations failed while many others have succeeded. Vandenbroucke described the *coup de main* as "small parties of warriors, operating with limited resources and without hope of reinforcement… repeatedly conduct[ing] sudden strikes—frequently deep within enemy lines—relying on shock, surprise, speed, and

maneuver to defeat an often numerically superior enemy."*31* While Vandenbroucke's narrative is compelling, he failed to recognize the difference between the utilization of UW in the form of support for an indigenous insurgency, as during the Bay of Pigs, and the use of SF to conduct difficult tactical military operations. Vandenbroucke unintentionally conflated UW during the Bay of Pigs, with three military raids. "Raids are operations to temporarily seize an area, usually through forcible entry, in order to secure information, confuse an adversary, capture personnel or equipment, or destroy an objective or capability."[32] The military raid is a conventional military operation, often executed unilaterally, rather than with and through an indigenous population. Vandenbroucke's failure to understand these nuances weakens his overall argument; however, he succeeded in presenting an excellent strategic and tactical review of the Bay of Pigs

Prologue to Sub-state Unconventional Warfare

World War I witnessed the first significant modern use of UW as a deliberate economy of force operation in peripheral campaigns to support conventional operations.[33] The British utilized unconventional, protracted warfare outside of Europe supporting indigenous resistance elements, often referred to as *partisans*, aimed at defeating the constituted government or occupying power.[34] Unconventional warfare is often employed as a method to force an enemy to commit significant combat power, in the form of conventional military forces, to guard rear areas restricting available forces for employment elsewhere. The incumbent army must spread their conventional military force throughout an area of operation to guard against attack at many

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[31] Lucien S. Vandenbroucke, *Perilous Options, Special Operations as an Instrument of Foreign Policy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 3.

[32] JP 3-05, S*pecial Operations*, V-27.

[33] B.H. Liddell Hart, *A History of the World War 1914-1918* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1935), 280, 485-486, 553-562.

[34] G.L. Ulmen, translator's introduction to *Theory of the Partisan* by Carl Schmitt (New York: Telos Press Publishing, 2007), ix.

locations, thus preventing the concentration of combat power in space or time. This application of UW by the British during World War I was informed by the Spanish guerrilla experience fighting Napoleonic France on the Iberian Peninsula during the Peninsular War of 1807-1814. In that war, the French army was forced to spread combat power throughout Spain to defend against attacks on French foraging parties by Spanish guerrillas. The French army was unable to focus combat power in space and time with the Spanish guerrillas occupying 19,000 French troops during the victorious Allied offensive of 1812, led by the Duke of Wellington.[35]

On 20 August 20 1917, T.E. Lawrence published his "Twenty-Seven Articles" in *The Arab Bulletin.* Lawrence's observations reflected his personal emphasis on gaining a nuanced understanding of the Arab national character, therefore his missives often concern matters of Arab etiquette. Nevertheless, Lawrence's recommendations provided valuable insight regarding the Arab approach to nation-building, war making, and the role of a foreign power in aiding such endeavors. Furthermore, Lawrence repeatedly cautioned that the principles in the "Twenty-Seven Articles" were not a panacea for all similar future endeavors; instead they applied to a specific people in a specific context.[36] T.E. Lawrence's experiences led him to counsel future military advisors not to "try to do too much with your own hands. Better the Arabs do it tolerably than that you do it perfectly. It is their war, and you are to help them, not to win it for them ... your practical work will not be as good as, perhaps, you think it is.[37]

T.E. Lawrence's deference to Arab control of that insurgency demonstrated a broad guiding principle behind the successful implementation of a guerrilla movement, that of gaining and maintaining political support of the population. Lawrence believed that without the backing of

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[35] Tone, *The Fatal Knot*, 144-145.

[36] Crandall, *America's Dirty Wars*, 133.

[37] T.E. Lawrence, *Twenty-Seven Articles* (Seattle: Praetorian Press, 2011), 7.

the Arab population, he could not win, but by gaining their support, he could not lose.[38] Echoes of this dictum continue to reverberate within military advisory efforts since the Arab Revolt.[39] Lawrence further clarified this principle of insurgent control and influence over the population when he stated that successful rebellions require only two percent of the population to be active guerrilla fighters when the other ninety-eight percent is passively sympathetic.[40]

Support from the people for the aims and goals of the insurgent is not necessary, even if it is desirable. Rather, the level of support from the people for the insurgent can be seen as a measure of the ability of insurgent elements to control the people. Whether achieved through willing cooperation or by threats, acts of terror, or physical occupation is immaterial.[41] Stathis Kalyvas suggests that control can be measured on a continuum with five discrete zones ranging from 1 to 5 in his analysis of the dynamics of polarization, civil war, and violence. Zone 1 is a geographical area of total incumbent or government control, and zone 5 is an area of total insurgent control. Between zones 1 and 5 lay zones, 2, 3, and 4 which are geographical areas where control varies. The government primarily dominates zone 2, while insurgents predominantly control zone 4, and zone 3 contested with both sides exerting equal levels of control.[42] Thus, the insurgent is locked in competition with the incumbent for control of the population, with neither side needing to possess the hearts and minds of the population, only the peoples' willing or unwilling acquiescence in order to survive.[43] Chinese Communist

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[38] John C. Hulsman, "Think Again: Lawrence of Arabia," *Foreign Policy* (September 29, 2009): accessed January 18, 2016, http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2009/09/29/think_again _lawrence_of_arabia?page=o,o.

[39] Crandall, *America's Dirty Wars*, 134.

[40] T. E. Lawrence, "Guerrilla Warfare," Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1950.

[41] Krepinevich, *The Army and Vietnam*, 9.

[42] Kalyvas, *The Logic of Violence in Civil* War, 196.

[43] Krepinevich, *The Army and Vietnam*, 9.

revolutionary Mao Zedong stated that "the people are like water and the army is like fish"[44] in describing the necessity of population control within this dynamic.

Mao Zedong stunned Western Europe and the United States in the late 1940s when his force of Communist guerrillas defeated the US backed Chinese Nationalists to gain control of the Chinese mainland. Mao demonstrated to the rest of the world that dogged perseverance and acute political acumen could overcome massive military technical disadvantages. The son of a wealthy farmer from Shaoshan, in Hunan Province, Mao served as a soldier for six months during the 1911 Xinhai Revolution that overthrew China's Qing dynasty and established the Republic of China in support of the Nationalist cause. By 1916, Mao worked as a librarian at Beijing University where he came under the influence of Li Dazhao, another librarian and early Chinese Communist. Mao co-founded the Chinese Communist Party (CPC) in 1921 with Li Dazhao and Chen Duxiu, a teacher. Early on, the CPC were advised Russian Comintern liaison officers, who advocated a traditional Marxist revolutionary approach based on the urban *proletariat*.[45] The Chinese Communist leadership initially adhered to Marxist-Leninist dogma that revolution must originate in urban areas as demonstrated during the Bolshevik takeover of Petrograd in 1917.[46]

Mao Zedong's agrarian background contrasted with that of most other Marxist leaders, granting Mao unique insights as he continuously studied revolutionary warfare. Divergent from other Chinese Marxists, Mao did not believe that the Chinese urban proletariat possessed enough size or strength to defeat the Chinese warlords and control the nation. Throughout 1926 and 1927, Mao developed a new revolutionary concept to implement insurgency in China while acknowledging a disadvantageous environment for a Marxist-Leninist urban-based revolution.

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[44] Mao Zedong, *Aspects of China's Anti-Japanese Struggle* (Bombay: People's Publishing House, 1948), 48.

[45] Thomas X. Hammes, *The Sling and The Stone: On War in the 21st Century* (St. Paul, MN: Zenith Press, 2004), 45-46.

[46] Crandall, *America's Dirty Wars*, 157.

Mao believed that the potential for Chinese revolution emanated from China's overwhelmingly rural population as opposed to the urban proletariat utilized by the Bolsheviks to effect Russian revolution. Mao viewed revolution as a political struggle to maintain and protect the will of the people, rather than as an episodic spasm created by the urban proletariat to overthrow the government.[47]

Mao based the theory of the *mass line* on the *vanguard party* concept developed by Vladimir Ilyich Ulyanov, a.k.a. *Lenin*. However, instead of relying on Soviet political, intellectual elite to formulate propaganda and drive the revolution, Mao's mass line had three components summarized by the phrase "from the masses, to the masses."[48] The elements of the Maoist mass line are gathering ideas from the masses, processing these ideas in the interests of the masses, and returning these ideas in the form of a political position to advance the revolutionary struggle.[49]

Mao's development of the mass line was a deliberate effort to raise the political consciousness of the masses and gain their support.

> To link oneself with the masses, one must act in accordance with the needs and wishes of the masses… objectively the masses need a certain change, but subjectively they are not yet conscious of the need… We should not make the change until… most of the masses have become conscious of the need and are willing and determined to carry it out… Unless they are conscious and willing, any kind of work… will fail…. There are two principles here: one is the actual needs of the masses rather than what we fancy they need, and the other is the wishes of the masses, who must make up their own minds instead of our making up their minds for them.[50]

Mao formulated the theory of the mass line to address specific concerns of the masses and gain their support, inverting the traditional societal relationship between political elite and the people. The masses informed the revolutionary political struggle rather than vanguard party elites

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[47] Hammes, *The Sling and The Stone*, 46.

[48] Zedong, *Selected Works,* 119.

[49] Ibid., 241-242.

[50] Ibid., 236-237.

imperiously dictating policy to the proletariat. The mass line also ensured that communist

political efforts maintained the altruism of the people for the revolution. The Communist Red

Army's very survival depended on cultivating a benevolent relationship with the rural masses.[51]

The foundation underlying all coordinated revolutionary activity during protracted war is

political organization of the people for the purpose of mobilization. Mao and his political cadre

achieved mass mobilization through the mass line to address grievances. Mao came to the same

conclusion with regard to the people as T.E. Lawrence had; stating that political mobilization of

the people is "the most fundamental condition for winning the war."[52]

Carl von Clausewitz influenced Mao with regard to the relationship between politics and

war. According to Clausewitz, "war is not merely an act of policy, but a true political instrument,

a continuation of political intercourse, carried on with other means… The political object is the

goal, war is the means of reaching it, and means can never be considered in isolation from their

purpose."[53] Mao Zedong echoed Clausewitz' established relationship between war and politics

while further expounding upon Clausewitz's original concept as justification for resorting to

violence to remove resistance in pursuit of a political aim.

> "War is the continuation of politics." In this sense, war is politics and war itself is a
> political action… there has never been a war that did not have a political character…
> "War is the continuation of politics by other . . . means." When politics develops to a
> certain stage beyond which it cannot proceed by the usual means, war breaks out to
> sweep the obstacles from the way.... When the obstacle is removed and our political aim
> attained the war will stop. Nevertheless, if the obstacle is not completely swept away, the
> war will have to continue until the aim is fully accomplished.... It can therefore be said
> that politics is war without bloodshed while war is politics with bloodshed.[54]

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[51] Hammes, *The Sling and The Stone*, 46-47.

[52] Franklin M. Osanka, *Modern Guerrilla Warfare; Fighting Communist Guerrilla Movements, 1941-1961* (Glencoe, NY: Free Press, 1962), 136.

[53] Clausewitz, *On War*, 87.

[54] Zedong, *Selected Works*, 152-153.

Clausewitz formulated his theory of the relationship between war and politics within the context of interstate war, i.e. violence between two or more states.[55] Mao applied Clausewitz's theory of war and politics to the context of intrastate war, i.e. sustained political violence between armed groups representing the state, and one or more non-state groups.[56] Mao expanded the accepted Clausewitzian paradigm of interstate violence to actualize international political objectives, to include intrastate violence used to achieve domestic political ambitions. Mao thereby legitimized CPC partisan violence against domestic political adversaries within China by expanding the paradigm within which violence is accepted. Partisans alter the conventional paradigm of warfare within which violence is controlled and bracketed by international law, into a domain of true enmity, which intensifies until it ends in the extermination of either incumbent or insurgent.[57]

  The term, *partisan*, is informed by historical figures such as Francisco Espoz y Mina and George Washington. Espoz y Mina used the irregularity, increased mobility, and rural character of the Division of Navarre to achieve victory over the Napoleonic French army during the Peninsular War of 1807-1814. The men of Navarre had distinct advantages in the areas of flexibility, speed, and capability to switch from attack to retreat used with devastating effect against the French army. The Navarrese fought a defensive war against the French invader, which limited Navarrese hostility to French who were physically located on the Iberian Peninsula. Furthermore, Espoz y Mina enforced a high degree of discipline within his partisan force,

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[55] Alan Collins, ed., *Contemporary Security Studies* (Oxford: Oxford University Studies, 2013), 196.

[56] Ibid., 165.

[57] Carl Schmitt, *Theory of the Partisan* (New York: Telos Press Publishing, 2007), 11.

legitimizing the Division of Navarre, and gaining popular support, which eventually lead to official recognition by the Spanish monarchy.[58]

George Washington integrated irregular New Jersey partisan efforts with those of the Continental Army to defeat a much larger British army during the Forage Wars of 1776-1777.[59] Washington understood that the Revolutionary War was a contest of popular opinion. He reminded his men that they were an army of liberty and freedom, and that the rights of humanity for which they were fighting should extend to the British and Hessians.[60] In so doing, Washington juxtaposed the ethical American treatment of British and Hessian prisoners of war with callous British attitudes toward rape and pillage as they spread British combat power into New York and New Jersey. Washington exploited the intense political nature of the New Jersey partisans to coordinate their hit and run attacks against British foraging parties into the greater military effort. Superior American knowledge of the terrain enhanced partisan tactical capability during ambushes, and a use of violence in defense of their homes legitimized partisan violence. Jover Zamora called this resourceful use of terrain and utilization of violence in a defensive manner, "the telluric character of the partisan."[61] Thus, the four characteristics of the partisan are; increased irregularity, increased mobility, telluric character, and intense political engagement.[62]

Mao Zedong seized upon the telluric connection that the rural Chinese populace had with ancestral homelands while politically organizing a nearly limitless supply of people to conduct guerrilla attacks against a Chinese KMT concerned mostly with urban China. Mao's methodical

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[58] Tone, *The Fatal Knot*, 177-179.

[59] David H. Fischer, *Washington's Crossing* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 348.

[60] Ibid., 276.

[61] Schmitt, *Theory of the Partisan*, 20.

[62] Ibid., 14-22.

three-phased approach to *protracted war*, i.e. the *strategic defensive*, the *stalemate*, and the *strategic offensive*, to mold the Chinese people into an instrument capable of overthrowing the Chinese Nationalists was developed after Mao examined successful guerrilla and revolutionary movements throughout world history.[63] If one were to overlay Mao Zedong's three phases of protracted war with Stathis Kalyvas' five discrete zones of control, Mao's strategic defensive phase occurs in zone 1, incumbent control, and in zone 2, incumbent dominance, of Kalyvas' organizing framework. Mao's stalemate phase ensues in zone 3 where control is contested on Kalyvas' continuum of control, and Mao's strategic offensive phase transpires in Kalyvas' insurgent dominated zone 4, and insurgent controlled zone 5. Control of the population precipitates effective political-military action by either incumbent or insurgent. Without the supporting context of a controlled or dominated population, political, military, and economic actions are episodic in nature, lacking significance because effects are not enduring.

Strategic Defensive		Stalemate	Strategic Offensive	
Incumbent Control	Incumbent Dominance	Control Contested	Insurgent Dominance	Insurgent Control

Figure 1. Mao's Protracted War Phases and Kalyvas' Zones of Control

Source: Created by the author

The lasting effects of *Mao Zedong thought*, or *Maoism* on the rest of the world is difficult to overstate. Maoism was the guiding political and military ideology for the Communist Party of

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[63] Crandall, *America's Dirty Wars*, 161.

China from the 1920s until the 1970s. Maoism has been a guiding force for revolutionary

movements around the world including the Viet Minh revolt against French colonialism, and the

Viet Cong insurgency against South Vietnam and the U.S. during the Vietnam War. Maoism also

inspired Ernesto "Che" Guevara as Che attempted to develop a theory of revolution unique to

Latin America in light of the successful 26th of July Movement to overthrow the Batista regime

in Cuba.[64] Two aspects of Maoism already discussed in previous sections are *people's war*, and

the *mass line*. Two other theoretical facets of Maoism applicable to the discussion on UW are

new democracy and *agrarian socialism.[65]*

New democracy is a theory informed by 19th century German philosopher, economist,

and revolutionary sociologist Karl Marx.[66] Marx proposed that economic evolution occurs in five

sequential steps. Those steps are slavery, feudalism, capitalism, socialism, and communism.[67]

Mao's theory integrated the bourgeois-democratic revolution with socialism. Mao called this

combined capitalism-socialism step, new democracy.[68] New democracy was a significant

departure from Marx's theories regarding the necessary conditions to pass from feudalism to

communism. Marx theorized that societies had to pass through capitalism to forge industries that

generated class antagonism between proletariat and bourgeois. That enmity eventuated into a

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[64] Brian Loveman and Thomas Davies Jr., Introduction to *Guerrilla Warfare*, by Che Guevara (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1985), 7-9.

[65] Alexander C. Cook, *Mao's Little Red Book: A Global History* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 27.

[66] Joseph A. Schumpeter, *Ten Great Economists: From Marx to Keynes* (London: Routledge, 1997), 6-9.

[67] Karl Marx, *Das Kapital: A Critique of Political Economy* (Washington, DC: Regnery Publishing, 1999), 290-300.

[68] Samir Amin, *Samir Amin: Pioneer of the Rise of the South* (Paris: Springer International Publishing, 2014), 78-80.

working-class seizure of political power, leading to a classless society, or communism.[69]

The Chinese Communist revolution focused on gaining influence and support from the rural Chinese rather than through an urban proletariat. Mao's theory of agrarian socialism contradicted the Bolshevik Revolution experience because most Chinese lived in rural areas, while the Bolsheviks were urbanites.[70] Mao planned to shape the Chinese rural population's telluric character through the auspices of agrarian socialism into a weapon that the Communist Party could wield to seize power.[71] Mao's theories of people's war, mass line, new democracy and agrarian socialism, and Lenin's vanguard party concept held great appeal to nationalists, socialists, and communist revolutionaries around the globe, especially those who lived in rural nations with feudalistic economies dominated by other nations. Ho Chi Minh, Vo Nguyen Giap, Fidel Castro, and Che Guevara were all variously influenced by Lenin and Mao, adapting elements of revolutionary theory and methodology during their respective colonial and civil wars.

Colonial war and civil war both relate to partisan warfare.[72] Colonial war refers to the wars of national liberation fought by indigenous populations against foreign powers who had established colonies within autochthonous territories.[73] The term relates to wars fought by European armies in Asia and Africa. Civil war is considered armed combat within a specific geographic territory between parties subject to a common authority at the outset of hostilities.[74] Civil war is conducted to bifurcate territory and create a separate nation, gain recognition from

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[69] Karl Marx, *Critique of the Gotha Programme* (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1970), 13-30.

[70] Schmitt, *Theory of the Partisan*, 57.

[71] John H. Badgley and John W. Lewis, *Peasant Rebellion and Communist Revolution in Asia* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1974), 249.

[72] Schmitt, *Theory of the Partisan*, 11.

[73] T. David Mason, *Caught in the Crossfire: Revolutions, Repression, and the Rational Peasant* (Lanham, MA: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2004), 22.

[74] Kalyvas, *The Logic of Violence in Civil War*, 5.

the existing regime to increase one's rights and privileges, overthrow the incumbent, or amalgamate previously fractured borders and unify disparate populations under one regime. Ho Chi Minh and Vo Nguyen Giap fought a colonial war against the French during the First Indochina War, and a civil war against the South Vietnamese and US during the Vietnam War, providing strategic context for the PRU case study.

The Battle of Dien Bien Phu was the decisive military confrontation of the First Indochina War between the French Union's Far East Expeditionary Corps, and the Viet Minh, ending over one hundred years of French colonialism in Indochina. Ho Chi Minh, political leader of the Viet Minh, and Vo Nguyen Giap, military commander of the Viet Minh, executed a tightly coordinated political-military effort during their war of national liberation to gain independence from colonial influence. Ho Chi Minh utilized Mao Zedong's theories of people's war, mass line, and agrarian socialism, while Vo Nguyen Giap combined Mao's three phases of protracted warfare with T.E. Lawrence's implementation of guerrilla warfare in peripheral operations to support other conventional military force operations.[75]

Ho Chi Minh, which means, "the enlightened one," was a Vietnamese nationalist who employed elements of Maoism to unify the Vietnamese population and achieve independence from France. [76] Ho Chi Minh and the Indochinese Communist Party (ICP) revived the Vietnamese Independence Brotherhood League, or Viet Minh, in 1941 during World War II. Non-communist Viet Nationalists had formed the Viet Minh between late 1935 and early 1936 before it lapsed. Ho and the ICP's Viet Minh was a popular political front organization modeled

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[75] Peter G. Macdonald, *Giap: The Victor in Vietnam* (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 1993), 23.

[76] Cecil B. Currey, *Victory at Any Cost. The Genius of Viet Nam's Gen. Vo Nguyen Giap* (Washington DC: Potomac Books, 1999), 51; Jeremi Suri, *Liberty's Surest Guardian: American Nation-Building from the Founders to Obama* (New York: Free Press, 2011), 181.

after Mao Zedong's Second United Front, designed to mobilize the populace and gain sympathy

from around the world. The Viet Minh had strong communist connections with the Soviet

Comintern, and the Chinese Communist Party, significant because the Chinese and Viet were

traditional enemies, yet the organization also attracted support from other anti-colonialist

elements.[77] The Vietnamese Nationalist Kuomintang (KMT), a competing anti-communist group

of nationalists, briefly joined the Viet Minh in the fight for Vietnamese independence.[78] While

the popular front strategy to mobilize a vast spectrum of anti-imperialists was more aspiration

than reality, the Viet Minh did succeed in changing the political dynamic in and around Vietnam

by building a nation-wide movement for national independence.[79]

During the First Indochina War, the French cast the Viet Minh as an ideological,

communist insurgent movement rather than a nationalist independence movement to justify

French military intervention. The French knew that suppression of a Vietnamese independence

movement would not resonate with French citizenry; therefore, the conflict in Vietnam was

framed as a civil war between ideological communists and nationalist anti-communists.

Ideological movements such as communism failed from lack of support or succeeded by force of

arms, however a strong nationalist movement could be nearly insurmountable. The only way to

defeat a nationalist movement was with another stronger nationalist movement. The French had

to modify the Vietnamese war for independence into a civil war between the Viet Minh and an

anti-Viet Minh nationalist movement within Vietnam.[80] Therefore, the French restored Bao Dai,

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[77] Currey, *Victory at Any Cost*, 179.

[78] Spencer C. Tucker, *Encyclopedia of the Vietnam War: A Political, Social and Military History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 443.

[79] William J. Duiker, *Ho Chi Minh: A Life* (New York: Hyperion, 2000), 254.

[80] Gary A. Donaldson, *America at War Since 1945: Politics and Diplomacy in Korea, Vietnam, and the Gulf War* (Westport CT: Praeger Publishers, 1996), 76-77.

the abdicated emperor of Vietnam and placed him at the head of the new nation of Cochinchina in the spring of 1949. The French hoped to influence strategic context by constructing a narrative of Vietnamese nationalism friendly to French colonialism, hostile to the Viet Minh, and built upon mass Vietnamese support for the Nguyen dynasty, of whom Bao Dai was a descendant.[81] Unfortunately, the French had to placate their own populace, mollify the international community, and convince skeptical Vietnamese who had endured a legacy of French abuse.

Narrative is inextricably intertwined with the concept of strategic context. By applying Mao's illustration of context as differences in the time, place, and nature of wars to the First Indochina War, it becomes apparent that a French version of Vietnamese nationalism was not likely to connect with the Vietnamese populace after World War II. Vietnamese nationalism rooted in the Nguyen dynasty and supportive of French colonialism may have resonated prior to World War II; however, the strategic context had shifted from the time that France had last exerted control over their Vietnamese colony. Two of the three contextual factors that Mao Zedong mentions, time and nature, had altered for the French in Vietnam after World War II. Antecedent events precipitating this contextual shift were; Viet Minh resistance efforts during World War II which caused Vietnamese nationalism to amalgamate around Ho Chi Minh, the continued development of unconventional war theory and doctrine by both revolutionary and conventional military forces, and a decreased acceptance for colonies within the international community in the years after the war.[82] The French formulated a competing narrative of Vietnamese nationalism that suited French interest, but was not rooted in the strategic context of the time. Furthermore, the French compounded a failure to compose a supporting narrative that framed their use of violence in Vietnam, by specifically characterizing the Viet Minh threat as an

[81] Donaldson, *America at War Since 1945*, 77.

[82] Mark A. Lawrence and Fredrik Logevall, *The First Vietnam War: Colonial Conflict and Cold War Crisis* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007), 56-57.

illegitimate group of insurgents in the North. French portrayal of the Viet Minh as extralegal guerrillas, rather than a competing group of communist nationalists, caused the French to believe they could defeat the Viet Minh, commanded militarily by Vo Nguyen Giap, with conventional military force while controlling the State of Vietnam government.[83]

The Viet Minh were fortunate to have revolutionary military commander Vo Nguyen Giap to lead them against the French. In order to wear down the French Union's Far East Expeditionary Corps, Giap adopted Mao Zedong's strategy of protracted war. Insurgency generally follows the three phased model developed by Mao and adapted by Vo Nguyen Giap in Vietnam.[84] Vo Nguyen Giap's three phases were: *the phase of contention*, during which insurgents agitated and proselytized among the masses; second, *the phase of equilibrium*, which entailed overt violence, guerrilla operations against the government security apparatus, and the establishment of bases; and third, *the counteroffensive phase*, which encompassed open warfare between insurgent and government forces designed to topple the existing regime.[85]

At first glance, Vo Nguyen Giap's three-phased model of long-term revolutionary war seems similar to Mao Zedong's three phases of protracted war. Mao's *strategic defensive* phase appears to correlate with Giap's *phase of contention*, Mao's *stalemate phase* with Giap's *phase of equilibrium*, and Mao's *strategic offensive* phase with Giap's *counteroffensive phase*. This understanding is mostly correct; however, there are some key differences between the two methodologies. Activities conducted during the phase of contention were predominantly organization and guerrilla warfare. The phase of equilibrium entailed a mix of guerrilla and

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[83] Donaldson, *America at War Since 1945*, 76-77.

[84] Krepinevich, *The Army and Vietnam*, 7.

[85] General Vo-Nguyen Giap, *People's War, People's Army* (New York: Praeger Publishers 1962), 46-47.

mobile warfare, and the counteroffensive phase incorporated mobile warfare and some positional warfare utilizing conventional forces. Giap relied on conventional military force much earlier than Mao to gain and hold new territory.[86]

Vo Nguyen Giap's three-phased model of long-term revolutionary war incorporated a more robust capability and intent to switch back and forth between the various phases of warfare.[87] These shifts were based on environmental conditions specific to the various regions within Vietnam where conflict occurred. Mao Zedong clearly delineated the three phases of protracted war, with the intent to move from one stage to the next in a fixed, orderly manner consistent across China. Mao believed that retreat from a more advanced state to an earlier phase constituted defeat and was unacceptable. Giap perceived the three phases of long-term revolution more fluidly than Mao did. Giap's discernment was born of the fact that the three phases did not develop uniformly across Vietnam, and all phases occurred simultaneously within different regions at different times during the First Indochina and Vietnam Wars.[88] Furthermore, Giap believed that some regions that had advanced to the third phase might move to earlier phases due to competing incumbent efforts. Giap was influenced in his understanding of revolutionary war phasing by Sun Tzu who Giap called one of his tutors.[89] "The enemy advances, we retreat; the enemy camps, we harass; the enemy tires, we attack; the enemy retreats, we pursue."[90] Vo Nguyen Giap viewed the phases of long-term revolution in a more flexible, nuanced way than Mao Zedong had contemplated the phases of protracted war.

Vo Nguyen Giap's perspective on phasing also aligns more closely with Stathis Kalyvas'

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[86] Currey, *Victory at Any Cost,* 53-54.

[87] Robert J. O'Neill, *General Giap: Politician and Strategist* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1969), 62.

[88] Taber, *War of the Flea*, 63-64.

[89] Currey, *Victory at Any Cost*, 153.

[90] Mao Zedong, *On People's War* (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1967), 32.

five discrete zones of control than Mao Zedong's model of protracted warfare. Both Giap and Kalyvas developed their constructs in consideration of separate opposing factions competing for control of the populace. Mao's phasing model assumes eventual populace support for the Communist cause as long as the correct methodology is applied, while both Giap and Kalyvas acknowledge that control is a contentious component of revolution. Giap's phase of contention occurs in areas under incumbent control (zone 1), and in those where the incumbent dominates (zone 2) within Kalyvas' structural model. Giap's phase of equilibrium is applied in areas of contested control (zone 3), and Giap's counteroffensive phase is launched in areas where the insurgent dominates (zone 4), or controls (zone 5) in Kalyvas' model.
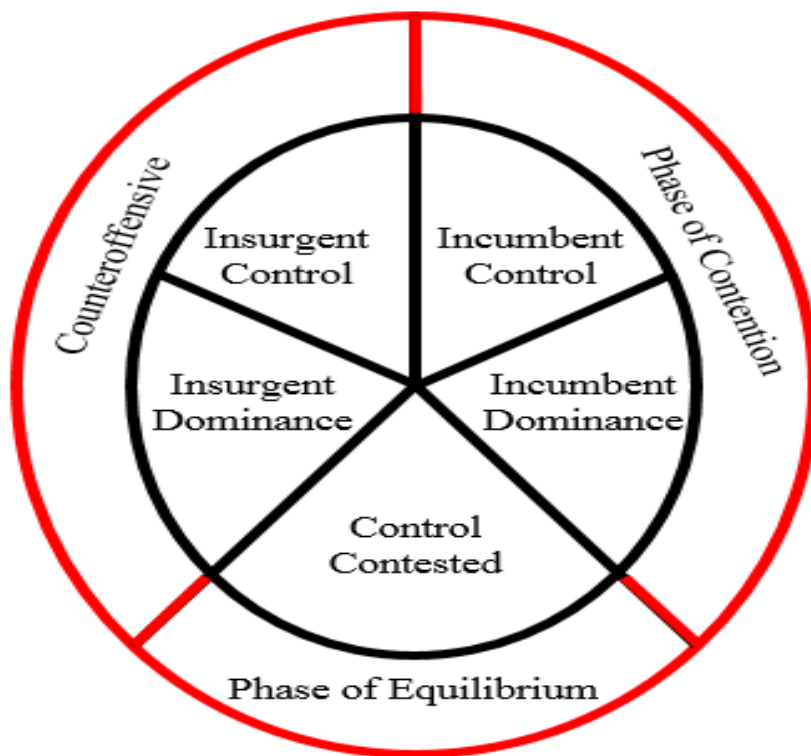

Figure 2. Giap's Long-Term Revolutionary War Phases and Kalyvas' Zones of Control

Source: Created by the author

Both Kalyvas and Giap acknowledge that control develops regionally rather than nationally, in contradiction to the Maoist phasing model. Observing Giap's development and application of an

evolved form of Mao's phasing concept demonstrated his significant mental agility, giving rise to the concept of regionalized, or sub-state, UW.

The Battle of the Red River Delta in the spring of 1951 characterized Vo Nguyen Giap's flexibility with regard to phasing. Giap believed that Viet Minh UW methodology previously applied in the Vietnamese northern border region against the French could be replicated in the area surrounding Hanoi, to seize the capital.[91] Giap organized Viet Minh troops within a tri-level military structure similar to the system Mao Zedong had developed in China. Permanent main force guerrilla soldiers, or chu-luc, were the main strike force throughout the revolutionary campaign, and occupied the top tier of the organization. Regional guerrillas, restricted to operations in their specified zones, were second tier fighters who could return to life as peasants or workers, if pressured. The du-kich, or village militia, resided on the bottom tier of the Viet Minh military apparatus, conducted local support operations for the higher tiered forces, and executed limited sabotage and ambush operations, fading back to farm or village at the first sign of opposition. Ideally, the Vietnamese military apparatus was mobilized within a specified region with the three organizational tiers conducting unified military operations.[92]

Vo Nguyen Giap believed that the environmental conditions within the Red River Delta region facilitated a Viet Minh move from the *phase of equilibrium* (phase two) to a phase three general *counteroffensive* against the French army commanded by French General Jean de Lattre de Tasigny. Giap spent three months in early 1951 mobilizing the local du-kich to stockpile resources to support the Viet Minh chu-luc main force units. The chu-luc was composed of sixty-one infantry battalions, twelve heavy weapons battalions with armament provided by Mao and the Chinese, and eight engineer battalions. However, Giap failed to integrate the second tier regional

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[91] Currey, *Victory at Any Cost,* 171.

[92] Taber, *War of the Flea,* 62.

guerrillas into the effort.[93] Therefore, Viet Minh military operations in the open coastal plains of the Red River Delta region were limited to Giap's chu-luc, allowing the French army to focus military effort, including concentrated artillery fire and air-delivered napalm, against the Viet Minh main force strike units. The Viet Minh suffered over twenty thousand killed and wounded in three major engagements during spring of 1951. Vo Nguyen Giap would never again attempt to challenge the French in conventional warfare in open terrain. Instead, the Viet Minh moved back to the *phase of equilibrium* in the Red River Delta region, and Giap withdrew the Viet Minh chu-luc to the hills of Vietnam to fight the French in terrain, which maximized Viet Minh manpower and mobility, while limiting French firepower advantages.[94] One such region was near the Chinese and Laotian borders in northwest Tonkin.

General Henri Navarre, commander of the French Far East Expeditionary Corps, held the dubious honor as the seventh and final commander of that military unit. Gen. Navarre believed that he could resort to direct military confrontation against Vo Nguyen Giap in Vietnam, and keep the Viet Minh out of Laos by establishing a center for military operations at Dien Bien Phu. A French base in northwest Tonkin threatened Giap's flank, closed off northern Laos, and accorded the French a location from which to conduct offensive operations against the Viet Minh.[95] Vo Nguyen Giap on the other hand, like Mao Zedong, was profoundly influenced by T.E. Lawrence and often preferred an indirect approach, going so far as to tell French General Raoul Salan in 1946, "my fighting gospel is T. E. Lawrence's *Seven Pillars of Wisdom*. I am never without it."[96]

T.E. Lawrence wrote, "Most wars were wars of contact, both forces striving into touch to

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[93] Currey, *Victory at Any Cost*, 171-175.

[94] Ibid., 175.

[95] Bernard B. Fall, *Hell in a Very Small Place* (New York: Lippincott, 1967), 31-32

[96] Phillip B. Davidson, *Vietnam at War* (Novato, CA: Presidio, 1988), 15.

avoid tactical surprise. Ours should be a war of detachment. We were to contain the enemy by the silent threat of a vast unknown desert; not disclosing ourselves till we attacked… never on the defensive except by accident and in error."[97] Vo Nguyen Giap's views on guerrilla warfare echoed Lawrence, relating that "[g]uerrilla war is the form of fighting by the masses… avoiding the enemy when he is the stronger and attacking him when he is the weaker. Now scattering, now regrouping, now wearing out, now exterminating the enemy… that wherever the enemy goes he is submerged in a sea of armed people… thus undermining his spirit and exhausting his forces."[98]

French forces at Dien Bien Phu under the command of Gen. Henri Navarre intended to seize the initiative by concentrating military force and conducting offensive operations to seek out and destroy the Viet Minh from that northern "mooring point."[99] Navarre planned to reinforce his ground forces by air and destroy the Viet Minh decisively to increase standing at future negotiations. Instead, Vo Nguyen Giap moved from the phase of equilibrium to a phase three counteroffensive in northwest Tonkin, incorporating all three elemental tiers of the Viet Minh military apparatus. Giap used local du-kich militia to haul Viet Minh artillery pieces up surrounding mountains expediting chu-luc targeting of airfields at Dien Bien Phu. The chu-luc prevented French planes from resupplying French ground forces employing Chinese anti-aircraft guns to isolate Dien Bien Phu.[100] Giap utilized regional guerrilla fighters to continuously threaten French rear areas, and prevent the French from relieving Dien Bien Phu.[101] The Viet Minh siege of Dien Bien Phu lasted for fifty-five days, ending with French surrender on May 18, 1954.

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[97] T.E. Lawrence, *Seven Pillars of Wisdom: A Triumph* (New York: Anchor Books, 1991), 194.

[98] Giap, *People's War, People's Army,* 52.

[99] Currey, *Victory at Any Cost*, 184-185.

[100] Ibid., 190-191.

[101] Taber, *War of the Flea*, 72.

Vo Nguyen Giap had seen the Vietnamese people's war of liberation as a gradual altering of the balance of power by accumulating thousands of small tactical victories, each of which was assured by achieving overwhelming local superiority, to transform weakness into power and achieve victory.[102] Fidel Castro, the Cuban nationalist lawyer, who later became a Marxist-Leninist, and Che Guevara, an Argentinian doctor, who later applied Mao's theoretical principles to develop a theory of Latin American revolutionary warfare, achieved similar successes during the Cuban Revolution. However, the Cuban application of revolutionary war was decidedly different from Vo Nguyen Giap's methodology. A supportive Cuban political environment provided the necessary strategic context for revolution. Castro and Guevara's July 26 Movement was only one of many anti-regime groups.[103] Virtually every sector of Cuban society, including the urban classes, had turned against Fulgencio Batista's regime.[104] The Cuban contextual environ meant that the mere continued existence of a guerrilla army was more important than achieving thousands of small tactical victories, as had been crucial and necessary for Vo Nguyen Giap.

Fidel Castro, his brother Raul, and 135 insurrectionists launched an attack against the Moncada army barracks in Santiago de Cuba on July 26, 1953, ten months prior to the French surrender to the Viet Minh at Dien Bien Phu. Castro's intent was to seize weapons and arm a Cuban people's army in a revolt to overthrow Cuban President Fulgencio Batista's regime. Sixty-one rebels were killed and more than half of the survivors were captured or executed during and after the failed assault.[105] Fidel Castro was captured in the Sierra Maestra mountains near Santiago a week afterwards and sentenced to fifteen years in prison; however the failed assault set

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[102] O'Neill, *General Giap: Politician and Strategist*, 62.

[103] Crandall, *America's Dirty Wars*, 247-248.

[104] Ibid., 250.

[105] Ibid., 246-247.

events into motion that would eventually lead to Batista's ouster.[106]

Batista released Fidel Castro from prison in early 1955, believing Castro posed little threat. Castro later moved to Mexico where he founded the July 26 Movement named after the failed barracks raid.[107] Che Guevara met Castro's *moncadista* revolutionaries in Mexico where they were again planning to depose Batista. Che joined the July 26 Movement in July 1955, to serve as the organization's doctor.[108] At the time Che wrote,"[a] political occurrence is having met Fidel Castro, the Cuban revolutionary, a young man, intelligent, very sure of himself and of extraordinary audacity; I think there is a mutual sympathy between us."[109]

The July 26 Movement was divided between the urban underground *llano* element and the rural *sierra* guerrilla fighters. Led by underground revolutionary Frank Pais, the *llano* was based out of Santiago de Cuba, in the eastern Oriente Province. *Llano* members were typically from the Cuban professional class, and thus performed critical planning and logistical functions within the revolution. Frank Pais was largely responsible for gaining support from important social and political figures within Cuban society, broadening the insurrectional base of support to elements of the population other than the rural Cuban poor who felt exploited by American companies that dominated the Cuban economy. President John F. Kennedy later stated that, "I believe that there is no country in the world…including any and all the countries under colonial domination, where economic colonization, humiliation and exploitation were worse than in Cuba,

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[106] Julia E. Sweig, *Cuba: What Everyone Needs to Know* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 21.

[107] Crandall, *America's Dirty Wars*, 247.

[108] Rooney, *Guerrilla*, 200-201.

[109] Jon L. Anderson, *Che Guevara: A Revolutionary Life* (New York: Grove Press, 1997), 160-175.

in part owing to my country's policies during the Batista regime."[110]

The *llano* intended to establish an urban-based militia to conduct subversion, fomenting and executing a general strike throughout Cuba. Subversive *llano* activities in urban areas were to be coordinated with guerrilla attacks conducted by the *sierra* in rural areas. Castro and Che led the *sierra* who were mostly Cuban middle-class, communist reformers, but the organization also consisted of Ortodoxo opposition party activists. Despite their internal differences, Cuban nationalism and an abiding hatred for the Batista regime united the July 26 Movement.[111]

Revolutionary organizations, like the July 26 Movement, often employ a double-edged strategy, with subversion and armed struggle forming each side of the blade.[112] Subversive activity alone does not lead to a government's downfall, however when combined with guerrilla warfare in a revolutionary strategy, the effect can be devastating for modern, democratic governments. Democratic governments govern by popular participation and function by popular consent. Democratic institutions must maintain their domestic image in order to ensure prominence among the people, making concessions to liberal notions of what is democratic and just, or risk being replaced by another administration willing to satisfy the populace. This requirement makes popular government vulnerable, both psychologically and economically, to subversion and guerrilla attack because these governments must maintain normalcy. The ruling party will be replaced by another if economic activity ceases due to subversive activities like a general workers strike, or if the government security apparatus is unable to control the use of

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[110] Jean Daniel, "Unofficial Envoy: An Historic Report from Two Capitals," *The New Republic*, December 14, 1963, 15-17.

[111] Crandall, *America's Dirty Wars*, 247-248.

[112] William Rosenau, *Subversion and Insurgency* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2007), 5.

coercive violence due to constant guerrilla attacks.[113] A democratic government often cannot

openly crush a rebellion using the necessary level of force required, because to do so incurs the

risk of alienating additional factions.[114] Furthermore, foreign military assistance to suppress

indigenous guerrilla fighters can exacerbate the situation, by legitimizing the guerrilla's cause,

strengthening revolutionary resolve, and leading to fresh resistance.[115]

Fulgencio Batista did not fall because he was a dictator; he was overcome because he

completely relied on the support of the United States, a democratic nation, to continue his rule.

Batista's efforts were impaired because he had to maintain American support, which would not

permit him to be enough of a dictator to destroy the July 26 Movement.[116] Further, Batista's

regime did not possess the great degree of flexibility inherent in a democratically elected

government. Democracy's resilient character often enables the absorption of legitimate insurgent

factions into the body politic, and strengthens democracy against internal dissent. Batista may

have prevailed had he been either dictator or democratically elected president; instead, Batista's

regime was overwhelmed because he attempted to be both.

After the Cuban Revolution culminated in the successful 26th of July Movement, Che

Guevara attempted to describe the contextual environment required for guerrilla warfare,

believing that revolutionary activity exposed a regime's oppressive nature toward the populace.

> It is not to be thought that all conditions for revolution are going to be created through the
> impulse given to them by guerrilla activity… People must see clearly the futility of
> maintaining the fight for social goals within the framework of civil debate… In these
> conditions popular discontent expresses itself in more active forms. An attitude of

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[113] Taber, *War of the Flea*, 15; and Kalyvas, *The Logic of Violence in Civil War*, 223-245.

[114] Ibid., 15-16.

[115] Peter M. Senge, *The Fifth Discipline: The Art & Practice of the Learning Organization* (New York: Doubleday, 2006), 59.

[116] Taber, *War of the Flea*, 18-19.

resistance finally crystallizes in an outbreak of fighting, provoked initially by the conduct of the authorities.[117]

Che went further, suggesting that there were three fundamental truths taken from the example of the Cuban Revolution. Che Guevara's truths were: "(1) Popular forces can win a war against the army. (2) It is not necessary to wait until all conditions for making revolution exist; the insurrection can create them. (3) In underdeveloped America the countryside is the basic area for armed fighting."[118] Che's thesis provided the basis for French intellectual Regis Debray's *foco,* or *focalism* theory. Foco's central principle is that a vanguard of fast-moving, lightly equipped guerrilla fighters can provide a focus, or "foco" in Spanish, for popular discontent against a ruling party, thus leading to a general insurrection of the people.[119]

In late 1956, Che Guevara, Fidel and Raul Castro, and approximately eighty fighters left Mexico via Tuxpan on the Veracruz coast, sailing to Playa de los Colorados, Cuba, on the eastern side of the island. The revolutionary plan had been to coordinate the beach landing with an uprising in Santiago, led by *llano* underground commander Frank Pais. Pais initiated the uprising early and it was quickly defeated by the incumbent regime, thus the revolt failed to distract Batista's security forces from discovering the rebel landing force. As the Castro brothers, Che, and the *sierra* guerrilla fighters disembarked, the coast guard notified the Cuban military of the landing.[120] Batista's air force killed all but two dozen revolutionaries as they made their way from the beach into the Sierra Maestra mountains. The *sierra* attempted to organize a rural insurgency

[117] Che Guevara, *Guerrilla Warfare* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1985), 48.

[118] Ibid., 47.

[119] Regis Debray, *Revolution in the Revolution*, (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1980), 42-45.

[120] Rooney, *Guerrilla*, 202.

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to recruit and educate Cubans with a narrative blaming difficult living conditions on Fulgencio Batista's regime dominated by the United States for the purpose of economic colonialism.[121]

Neither the leadership, nor the guerrilla fighters of the July 26 Movement consciously adapted existing theoretical and doctrinal revolutionary precepts. Fidel Castro had been influenced by Ernest Hemingway's *For Whom the Bell Tolls,* stating, "[t]hat book helped me conceive of our own irregular war."[122] However, *sierra* actions are understood by viewing them through the theoretical lens that Lenin, Mao, and Giap provided.[123]

Castro and Che tied guerrilla violence to the Cuban people through claims that the July 26 Movement was acting in the interests of the populace, carrying out violence on their behalf. Lenin had defined this strategy as establishing the revolutionary vanguard.[124] Lenin created the vanguard party with the intent to establish a dictatorship of the proletariat, supported by the working classes, with the vanguard dictating policy to the proletariat.[125] Much of the *sierra's* actions centered on survival, with the *sierra* confusing the incumbent's strategy to trap the guerrillas by evading and ambushing Batista's army in the Sierra Maestra mountains.[126] In so doing, the Cuban rebels unknowingly applied Mao's principle of the unity of opposites. Mao's formulation is informed by the concepts of yin and yang, and postulated that the guerrilla exchange space, for time. Giving up territory meant continued survival for the guerrilla, violent

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[121] Crandall, *America's Dirty Wars*, 248.

[122] Max Boot, *Invisible Armies: An Epic History of Guerrilla Warfare from Ancient Times to the Present* (New York: Liveright Publishing Corporation, 2013), 431.

[123] Loveman and Davies, Intro. to *Guerrilla Warfare*, 5-10.

[124] Fischer, *The Life of Lenin*, 39.

[125] Duncan Townson, *The New Penguin Dictionary of Modern History: 1789–1945* (London: Penguin Books, 1994),462–464.

[126] Crandall, *America's Dirty Wars*, 249.

attacks against the incumbent and popular support for the insurgent.[127] Vo Nguyen Giap, insisted on a close tie between political vanguard and guerrilla fighter.[128] Binding politics to violence ensured that guerrilla war was revolutionary war, or "the extension of politics by means of armed conflict."[129] The July 26 Movement also maintained close ties between organizational leadership and guerrilla fighters, but that relationship was about expedience, the *sierra* was a tiny force of a few dozen, rather than to achieve a theoretical objective.[130] The *sierra's* instinctive approach to implementing revolution, rather than a deliberate strategy based on existing revolutionary theory, may explain why it took years to succeed despite a supportive Cuban contextual environment.

The Cuban army ineffectively engaged the rebel *sierra* in combat operations throughout the Cuban Revolution. Between December 1956 and January 1959, only two hundred Cuban army soldiers were killed in combat against the guerrillas, possibly indicating an unwillingness to force military action. Within less than a year, the Cuban army surrendered control of the Sierra Maestra to the July 26 Movement.[131] The *sierra* had survived to establish operational bases in the Sierra Maestra mountains. In February 1957, American *New York Times* reporter Herbert Matthews went to the rebel camp, vastly exaggerated the number of guerrilla fighters, and overstated Cuban popular support for Fidel Castro and the moncada as a result of rebel subterfuge. Matthews perpetuated Castro's claims that the movement was rooted in nationalism

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[127] Crandall, *America's Dirty Wars*, 8.

[128] T. N. Greene, ed., *The Guerrilla and How to Fight Him* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1965), 163-64.

[129] Taber, *War of the Flea,* 16.

[130] Crandall, *America's Dirty Wars*, 249.

[131] Ibid., 249.

with a democratic, socialist agenda.[132] Matthews' reporting drastically shifted the moncada's international image, describing Castro as a democratic leader opposed to communism.[133]

By late 1957, the July 26 Movement had established viable civil administration and crude hospitals within the Sierra Maestra, demonstrating the viability of the revolution as an alternative to the Batista regime.[134] According to Kalyvas, "insurgency should be understood primarily as a process of alternative state building - insurgent organizations tax, set up administrative structures, and seek to perform government functions for the population they control."[135] By implementing shadow government, the July 26 Movement had successfully shifted the Sierra Maestra region from a zone of parity (zone 3), to a zone dominated by the insurgent (zone 4).

In early 1958, the Eisenhower administration stopped supplying Batista militarily, and an active urban insurgency kept the Cuban army occupied in cities. In May, Batista ordered raw military recruits and reservists into battle against the increasingly successful and popular guerrilla fighters. Batista's offensive ended ignominiously with the inexperienced troops making little gains against the rebels in the Sierra Maestra mountains. Conditions continued to deteriorate for the incumbent regime until Batista fled Cuba for the Dominican Republic on New Years Eve 1958, leaving Havana to the victorious July 26 Movement.[136]

Provincial Reconnaissance Units

The Vietnam War began as a people's war, a struggle for control of the people's political allegiance. The organization that sought to subvert and challenge the government of South

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[132] Anderson, *Che Guevara: A Revolutionary Life*, 393-394.

[133] Rooney, *Guerrilla*, 204.

[134] Ibid., 203-207.

[135] Kalyvas, *The Logic of Violence in Civil War*, 244-245.

[136] Rooney, *Guerrilla*, 206-208.

Vietnam (GVN), using violence to coerce and control the populace and make effective governance impossible was the Viet Cong Infrastructure (VCI). Once established, the VCI underground, or shadow government infrastructure, enabled the Viet Cong to maintain a clandestine presence in all of South Vietnam's approximately 250 districts, even when American military operations annihilated entire units of Viet Cong guerrilla fighters. [137] VCI presence within South Vietnamese villages translated into little village cooperation with the GVN because of actual or threatened violence. VCI political infrastructure served as the roots for Ho Chi Minh's revolutionary efforts to occupy rural areas in South Vietnam, challenge the sovereignty of the GVN, and eventually overthrew the South Vietnamese government to unite a Vietnam divided by the 1954 Geneva Convention.[138] GVN's inability to secure the South Vietnamese populace from the VC created a situation where GVN sovereignty became fragmented or segmented throughout South Vietnam.

Hanoi directed the creation of the National Front for the Liberation of South Vietnam on December 20, 1960. The NLF did not draw existing South Vietnamese organizations together under a front in standard Leninist fashion.[139] Rather, the NLF created organizations in South Vietnam, forcing the populace to provide guerrilla fighters, pay taxes, and provide food and shelter for VC guerrillas and cadre. The NLF's emergence signaled an initiation of open political revolution in South Vietnam. Hanoi sought to ensure control of the rapidly growing NLF in 1961, and ensure that political considerations superseded military considerations. Hanoi therefore created the People's Revolutionary Party (PRP), formerly the southern branch of the North

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[137] Dale Andrade, *Ashes to Ashes: The Phoenix Program and the Vietnam War* (Lexington, MA: Lexington Books, 1990), 1.

[138] Ibid., 5.

[139] Douglas Pike, *War, Peace, and the Viet Cong* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1969), 3.

Vietnamese Worker's Party, to place the NLF "under the guidance of veteran revolutionaries."[140] The PRP's three main functions were to provide the NLF with political guidance, administrate the organization, and manage logistics for the movement of men and weapons along the Ho Chi Minh trail.[141] Another organization, the Central Office for South Vietnam (COSVN), made up of senior regional PRP and NLF members provided the direct link between the PRP and the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (DRVN) government. While the NLF was based in South Vietnam, it was controlled by the DRVN through COSVN, under the auspices of the PRP.[142] This indirect and convoluted organizational command structure obfuscated DRVN involvement in South Vietnam, leading casual observers to conclude that the NLF was a product of a discontented South Vietnamese populace.[143] The DRVN employed this approach to give the illusion that South Vietnam was in the midst of a civil war, while in reality the DRVN acted through proxies to challenge and fragment or segment GVN sovereignty, acting as an occupying power.

President Kennedy exemplified the generally supportive political context for UW in Vietnam in 1961 when he directed the CIA with initiating covert operations in North Vietnam to "turn the heat up on Hanoi and do to them what they were doing to the US ally in South Vietnam."[144] The problem for the CIA was that North Vietnam was a denied area, considered a more difficult environment than the Soviet Union, China, East Germany, or North Korea to develop resistance forces. President Kennedy became impatient with CIA efforts over the next

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[140] Douglas Pike, *Viet Cong: The Organization and Techniques of the National Liberation Front of South Vietnam* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1966), 137.

[141] Andrade, *Ashes to Ashes*, 8.

[142] Pike, *War, Peace, and the Viet Cong*, 18.

[143] Andrade, *Ashes to Ashes*, 7.

[144] Richard H. Schultz, Jr., *The Secret War Against Hanoi* (New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 1999) xiii.

two years, turning the majority of existing programs over to the military through Operation

Switchback in 1963, part of a "world-wide replacement of CIA leadership of clandestine

paramilitary operations."[145] Thus, Military Assistance Command Vietnam - Studies and

Observation Group (MACV-SOG) was established as the Joint Unconventional Warfare Task

Force (JUWTF) for North Vietnam and Laos, manned by USSF non-commissioned officers.[146]

MACV-SOG focused on the opposition of VC guerrillas in South Vietnam, attacking

Vietnamese Communist military targets in Laos, conducting military raids into North Vietnam,

and employing psychological operations against the Communist regime in North

Vietnam.[147] MACV-SOG initially oriented against VC guerrillas in South Vietnam and against

the NVA and North Vietnamese Communist regime, largely ignoring the VCI in South Vietnam.

Finally, established in 1967, the Civil Operations and Rural Development Support was an

interagency effort to pacify South Vietnamese rural areas.[148] Within CORDS, the CIA established

the Intelligence Coordination and Exploitation Program, later renamed Phoenix, or Phung Hoang

in Vietnamese, on December 20, 1967. Phoenix established district intelligence centers to identify

VCI, neutralized VCI in rural South Vietnam by capturing, killing, or converting them, and

established VCI prosecution protocols emphasizing local militias and police.[149] Provincial

Reconnaissance Units was the action arm created to neutralize the VCI. The supportive political

context for sub-state UW in South Vietnam, in terms of time, place, and nature was a

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[145] Charles M. Simpson, *Inside the Green Berets: The First Thirty Years* (Novato, CA: Presidio Press, 1983), 146.

[146] Ibid.

[147] Thomas K. Adams, *US Special Operations Forces in Action: The Challenge of Unconventional Warfare* (London: Frank Cass Publishers, 1998), 117-118.

[148] Major Ross Coffey, "Revisiting CORDS: The Need for Unity of Effort to Secure Victory in Iraq," *Military Review* (March-April 2006), 24.

[149] Douglas Valentine, *The Phoenix Program* (New York: William Morrow and Company, 1990), 128-141.

consequence of antecedent events leading up to the Vietnam War described previously, a product

of the largely undeveloped environment, and a response to the nature of the VCI threat to GVN's

survival. Fortuitously, the CIA and USSF had the PRUs with which execute sub-state UW in

South Vietnam in 1967.

The PRUs were composed of indigenous South Vietnamese recruited, trained, and

employed by the CIA and US military, primarily USSF, under the auspices of Phoenix. The CIA

recruited "people who were of like mind and like ability [who] automatically gravitated to that

sort of thing. Roughnecks tended to stick together. That's the kind of guys who went into the

PRU… You really had to be a tough nut to get into the PRU and stay in."[150] The number of US

military advisers for the PRUs grew from 54 in 1967 to 104 by 1969, with the number of advisors

assigned to each region commensurate with the VCI threat. The greater the control over the

population by the VCI, the higher number of military PRU advisers.[151] There were also between

fifteen and thirty CIA advisers to the PRUs totaling approximately 125 US advisers against a

maximum of five thousand South Vietnamese PRUs.[152]

The PRUs wreaked havoc against the VCI, relying on informants from among the

populace and the VC, some of whom occupied high positions within the organization, to amass

tactical intelligence and conduct offensive operations to capture or kill members of the shadow

government.[153] According to Col. Viet Lang of the Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN),

"the PRUs had informants in almost every hamlet. Most were relatives or acquaintances of the

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[150] CIA PRU adviser. Interview by Dale Andrade, 15 June 1989.

[151] OPS IA SO, "Fact Sheet: Provincial Reconnaissance Units (PRU), RVN," October 16, 1969, 1.

[152] MACCORDS, "NPFF/PRU Interim Report," 18 August 1969.

[153] Mark Moyar, *Phoenix and the Birds of Prey: Counterinsurgency and Counterterrorism in Vietnam* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 2007), 84.

PRUs who lived in the villages the PRUs came from."[154] During the final ten months of US military involvement with the PRUs, the organization conducted 50,770 intelligence-based operations, reported 7,408 Viet Cong and VCI captured, and 4,406 killed, with one hundred, seventy-nine PRUs killed.[155] For a force of less than five thousand, this type of quantifiable success exemplifies claims that the PRUs were the most effective action arm within Phoenix.[156]

Perhaps the greatest praise for the PRUs and for Phoenix came from Vietnamese Communist officials after the Vietnam War. General Tran Do, a communist commander in South Vietnam called anti-VCI efforts "extremely destructive," Col. Bui Tin, a senior military officer, said that the program was "devious and cruel," costing "the loss of thousands of our cadres." Nguyen Co Thach, Vietnam's foreign minister after Saigon's fall in 1975, claimed that anti-VCI operations "wiped out many of our bases," forcing many high-ranking communists to retreat to Cambodia.[157] Another anonymous official noted, "There were only two occasions when we were almost entirely wiped out. The first was in 1957-58, when Ngo Dinh Diem had much success in eliminating our infrastructure... [The second was] your pacification program [which] was very successful, especially Phung Hoang." According to empirical data, and to the communist opposition, the PRUs were a force capable of exhausting the VCI, directly connected selective violence to GVN political objectives, and obtained support from the South Vietnamese populace, exemplified through PRU intelligence collection from South Vietnamese collaborators.

Phoenix, or Phung Hoang, successfully neutralized 81,740 VCI during a four-year period from 1968 to 1972 by converting, capturing, or killing the Viet Cong in South Vietnam.[158] Within

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[154] Col. Viet Lang, ARVN (pseudonym). Interview by Mark Moyar.

[155] JCSM-752-69, "U.S. Involvement in the PRU Program in the RVN," December 8, 1969, 1.

[156] Andrade, *Ashes to Ashes*, 185.

[157] Stanley Karnow, *Vietnam: A History* (New York: Viking Press, 1983), 602.

[158] Andrade, *Ashes to Ashes*, 287.

Phoenix, the PRUs executed sub-state UW against the DRVN proxy VCI, who acted as an occupation force in South Vietnam. The DRVN challenged the GVN, utilizing the VCI in South Vietnam to fragment or segment GVN sovereignty. Within both the GVN and the US government, there existed a supportive political context to conduct sub-state UW during the Vietnam War due to the nature of the VCI threat as an externally supported challenger to the GVN, and because of historical regional precedent. The PRUs were a viable indigenous partner force capable of exhausting the opposition, directly tied VCI destruction to the political objective of GVN survival, and wrested populace control from the VCI by gaining tacit support from the South Vietnamese in many southern regions. US military and CIA advisory efforts with and through the PRUs to destroy VCI in South Vietnam fulfills all three dependent variables for sub-state UW. Nonetheless, while the PRUs in Vietnam are an example of the application of sub-state UW against an occupying power, USSF and CIA efforts were conducted in conjunction with conventional forces. Therefore, it is impossible to prove that sub-state UW is a viable methodology to implement in absence of conventional military forces based on the Vietnam War experience. However, the PRUs overwhelmingly demonstrated that a small force employed specifically to oppose an occupying force by destroying that element's political infrastructure could be devastatingly effective when all three dependent variables for sub-state UW are present.

Brigade 2506

The US State Department laid the foundations for the removal of Fidel Castro from power in Cuba in 1959, arguing that Castro's presence would have "serious adverse effects on the United States position in Latin America and corresponding advantages for International

Communism."[159] The CIA hadn't determined that Castro need to be removed until December 11,

1959 when J.C. King, chief of the CIA's Western Hemisphere Division wrote a memorandum to

CIA Director Allen Dulles laying out the case for overthrowing Castro's regime.[160] Dulles set up

a task force to begin orchestrating an operation to overthrow Castro on January 8, 1960 after

determining that Communist ideology was growing within Castro's regime, and action was

required to mitigate the threat.[161]

> A Program of Covert Action Against the Castro Regime, was developed by the CIA and
> approved by President Eisenhower on 17 March 1960, proposing a four part strategy to
> replace Fidel Castro. The four components were a. The creation of a responsible and
> unified Cuban opposition to the Castro regime… b. The development of … a powerful
> propaganda offensive. c. The creation and development of a covert intelligence and
> action organization within Cuba… d. The development of a paramilitary force outside of
> Cuba for future guerrilla action.[162]

The CIA intended a strategy against Castro similar to the one employed to overthrow Guatemalan

President Jacobo Arbenz in 1954, after Arbenz appeared to exhibit communist tendencies.[163]

According to Richard Drain, chief of operations for the Cuban project, the original

scheme was to infiltrate guerrilla fighters and see what happened similar in method to Castro and

Che Guevara's prosecution of the Cuban Revolution.[164] However, by January 1961, the CIA

shifted their strategy from a small guerrilla infiltration to a large amphibious landing with a

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[159] "Current Basic United States Policy Toward Cuba," November 5, 1959, Department of State, https://history.state.gov/historical documents/frus1958-60v06/d387.

[160] Jim Rasenberger, *The Brilliant Disaster: JFK, Castro, and America's Doomed Invasion of Cuba's Bay of Pigs* (New York: Scribner, 2011), 47-48.

[161] Ibid., 49.

[162] Paul L. Kesaris, *Operation Zapata: The "Ultrasensitive" Report and Testimony of the Board of Inquiry on the Bay of Pigs* (Frederick, MA: University Publications of America, 1981), 3-4.

[163] Vandenbroucke, *Perilous Options*, 12.

[164] Peter Wyden, *Bay of Pigs: The Untold Story* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1979) 46.

conventionally trained Cuban paramilitary force.[165] As the operation became more ambitious, the CIA was unable to preserve operational secrecy. The *New York Times* ran an article on the Cuban exile force in Guatemala on January 10, 1961, and Castro predicted that the US would invade Cuba before the end of January 1961.[166] In contrast, *Operation Success* to overthrow Arbenz had been a small affair with a few hundred poorly trained Guatemalan guerrillas. However, the CIA had deluded President Jacobo Arbenz into believing he was opposed by a large rebel force through the use of psychological warfare facilitated by maintaining strict operational secrecy.[167]

When the strategy for *Operation Zapata* shifted from guerrilla infiltration to amphibious landing designed to deliver what Richard Bissell, the CIA Deputy Director for Plans called "a demoralizing shock" to Castro, UW became less a vehicle to overthrow Castro's regime, and more a contingency plan if initial efforts failed.[168] CIA planners determined that the coastal city of Trinidad, where anti-Castro sentiment was strong, would support the Cuban paramilitary force, an organization composed of Cuban dissidents called Brigade 2506. Additionally, there were hundreds of Cuban guerrillas operating in the nearby Escambray Mountains. The CIA assessed that when the daylight amphibious assault was executed, the Escambray guerrillas would likely link up with Brigade 2506 propelling Castro from power.[169] With the *Trinidad* plan, the CIA intended to establish a lodgment to "serve as a rallying point for the thousands who are ready for overt resistance to Castro, but who hesitate to act until they feel some assurance of success. A

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[165] Vandenbroucke, *Perilous Options*, 16-17.

[166] Ibid., 17-18.

[167] Rasenberger, *Brilliant Disaster*, 68.

[168] "Proposed Operation Against Cuba," March 11, 1961, CIA, accessed January 18, 2016, https://history.state.gov/ historical documents/frus1961-63v10/d58; Rasenberger, *Brilliant Disaster*, 137.

[169] Vandenbroucke, *Perilous Options*, 19.

general revolt in Cuba, if one is successfully triggered… may serve to topple the Castro regime within… weeks."[170] While the CIA was formulating the *Trinidad* plan in early 1961, Castro had already been in power for more than two years, and according to CIA estimates at the time, Castro was predominantly in control, with his position likely to grow stronger over time.[171] Time was of the essence, for while there was segmented and fragmented sovereignty in central Cuba, those conditions would not last indefinitely.

President Kennedy's first State of the Union address on January 30, 1961, testified to the generally supportive political environment for some type of political military intervention in Cuba. "In Latin America Communist agents… have established a base on Cuba, only 90 miles from our shores. Our objection with Cuba is not over the people's drive for a better life. Our objection is to their domination by foreign and domestic tyrannies. Cuban social and economic reform should be encouraged… But Communist domination in this Hemisphere can never be negotiated."[172] President Kennedy was determined to oppose communist ascendancy in Cuba, believing action was necessary to remove Castro from power.[173]

Fidel Castro had risen to power in Cuba at the head of the 26th of July Movement in a sequence of events described previously. Castro's regime had striven to consolidate power and eventuate complete control in Cuba, determined as Che Guevara stated at the time, that "Cuba will not be Guatemala," however this process was incomplete in 1961.[174] On March 11, President

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[170] "Policy Decisions Required for Conduct of Strike Operations Against Government of Cuba," January 4, 1961, DDRS, 1985/001540.

[171] Sherman Kent, Memorandum for the Director, "Is Time on Our Side in Cuba?" March 10, 1961 [CIA/FOIA].

[172] Crandall, *America's Dirty Wars*, 239.

[173] Vandenbroucke, *Perilous Options*, 25-30.

[174] Greg Grandin, *The Last Colonial Massacre: Latin America in the Cold War* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), 5.

Kennedy rejected the CIA's *Trinidad* plan as too "spectacular," directing the CIA to present

alternatives that would "provide for a quiet landing, preferably at night, without… the appearance

of a World War II-type amphibious assault."[175] Accordingly, the CIA changed the landing

location to the Bahia de Cochinas, or Bay of Pigs, in Las Villas Province, 80 miles from the port

city of Trinidad.[176] Consequently, Brigade 2506 would not have indigenous support from Cuba's

traditional insurgent stronghold where guerrillas had challenged Castro's regime. Furthermore, a

slower popular response from the Cuban people was expected due to the Bay of Pigs' remote

locale. CIA planners assessed that Brigade 2506 must hold and defend the beachhead for three to

four days before a popular uprising to overthrow Castro would be triggered.[177]

Within Cuba, the political context for sub-state UW was mixed. Early 1961 was likely a

supportive period to conduct military operations in Cuba, although Castro's regime was working

to consolidate power and remove internal threats. The port of Trinidad may have been a

supportive location to trigger a popular uprising, but President Kennedy's desire to downplay US

involvement moved the landing to the Bay of Pigs where there would be little popular support.

The CIA intended to force Castro from power in a quick coup similar to Arbenz's ouster from

Guatemala, maintaining that if the initial plan failed, Brigade 2506 could retreat and make it to

the Escambray Mountains, 80 miles from the landing site.[178] UW, sub-state or otherwise, was a

contingency plan that Richard Bissell optimistically promoted, misleading Kennedy into

believing that Brigade 2506 had been trained as guerrillas capable of conducting UW.[179]

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[175] McGeorge Bundy, "Memorandum of Discussion on Cuba: National Security Action Memorandum 31," March 11, 1961; Kesaris, *Zapata*, 12-13.

[176] Vandenbroucke, *Perilous Options*, 31.

[177] Richard M. Bissell Jr., April 25, 1967, transcript, John F. Kennedy Oral History Collection, John F. Kennedy Library, Boston, MA.

[178] Vandenbroucke, *Perilous Options*, 31.

[179] Kesaris, *Operation Zapata*, 41-42.

Early on April 17, approximately 1,400 men, most of whom were Cuban exiles, attempted to invade their homeland and overthrow Fidel Castro. Brigade 2506 had trained for months in Guatemala in conventional military operations and tactics after the CIA made the decision to shift their strategy from UW to paramilitary strike force. A few men and officers from Brigade 2506 had trained as guerrillas for a short time in 1960, but the unit had never collectively trained to conduct UW. In the words of a CIA study done shortly after *Operation Zapata*, "such training would have detracted from the purpose for which the Brigade was organized and would have been detrimental to morale."[180] *Operation Zapata* unraveled quickly, because while Brigade 2506 held the beachhead, they ran out of ammunition, and their maritime supply chain came under attack by Cuban airplanes.[181] National Security Advisor McGeorge Bundy wrote in his assessment to President Kennedy that "the Cuban armed forces are stronger, the popular response is weaker, and our tactical position is feebler than we had hoped."[182] Three days after landing, Brigade 2506 fled the Bay of Pigs with over one thousand survivors captured by Castro's military.[183] President Kennedy's earlier decision to deny an airstrike against Castro's military had preordained Brigade 2506's eventual capture denying the Cuban paramilitary force the ability to exfiltrate the Bay of Pigs.[184] Had the Kennedy administration approved the airstrike, Brigade 2506 was incapable of exhausting the Cuban military, because it was a force trained to conduct a short defense in hopes of catalyzing a popular uprising, not an organization ready to execute

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[180] "What Briefing, If Any, Was Given the Brigade or the Brigade's Staff On Going Guerrilla?" May 31, 1961, CIA, accessed January 16, 2016, https://history.state.gov/historical documents/frus1961-63v10/d226.

[181] Crandall, *America's Dirty Wars*, 253.

[182] Rasenberger, *Brilliant Disaster*, 269.

[183] Crandall, *America's Dirty Wars*, 253.

[184] Charles P. Cabell and Richard M. Bissell, Jr. "Cuban Operation," May 9, 1961, DDRS 1985/001551; Vandenbroucke, *Perilous Options*, 42.

guerrilla warfare. Brigade 2506 linked violence against the Cuban military with overthrowing the Castro regime, and may have inspired Cuban popular support given time, but a few days defending the isolated Bay of Pigs did not precipitate a mass uprising.

US efforts with and through Brigade 2506 during *Operation Zapata* cost nearly $500 million and over one hundred lives, including US citizens and CIA agents, ending in failure.[185] Three intertwined decisions imperiled *Operation Zapata's* success. The first was the CIA determination to alter strategy from a small guerrilla infiltration eventuating Castro's overthrow through UW to a large amphibious invasion intended to inspire mass uprisings. The second compromise was to move landing locations from Trinidad, where Castro's sovereignty was challenged, to the isolated Bay of Pigs. This was linked to the CIA's earlier strategy shift because President Kennedy requested options to reduce *Operation Zapata's* signature after being briefed on the *Trinidad* plan. Had the CIA maintained the original plan, President Kennedy would likely not have required another landing site because the operational signature would have been low. The third decision, linked to Kennedy's desire to reduce operation signature and thus the second compromise, was a tactical determination denying air support for Brigade 2506 against Castro's military after the invasion. Cumulatively, these decisions caused *Operation Zapata's* failure.

Operation Zapata is not an example of sub-state UW. Although segmented and fragmented sovereignty was present in central Cuba in Sancti Spiritus province in 1961, the final plan failed to seize this potential opportunity. While fulfilling some of the dependent variables for sub-state UW, *Operation Zapata* appears a facsimile of Che Guevara's foco strategy, i.e. committing political violence with a guerrilla vanguard in order to focus popular discontent and inspire a mass uprising to overthrow the government. While President Kennedy wanted to intervene militarily in Cuba in early 1961 as Castro had yet to consolidate control, he was not

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[185] Peter Kornbluh, ed., *Bay of Pigs Declassified: The Secret CIA Report on the Invasion of Cuba (*New York: The New Press, 1988), 105; Crandall, *America's Dirty Wars*, 253.

prepared to support a large-scale amphibious landing in a major Cuban city. The CIA's compromise location, the Bay of Pigs, was not a supportive location to inspire a mass uprising of the Cuban people, nor was *Operation Zapata* itself conducive for sub-state unconventional warfare. UW was a contingency plan, and not a realistic one at that. The Escambray Mountains were 80 miles from the Bay of Pigs, and Brigade 2506 was untrained in guerrilla warfare. Brigade 2506 was trained to seize, hold, and defend a beachhead from attack with the expectation that the CIA and US military would provide support. When that support was denied, the operation failed.

Conclusion

This monograph investigated whether or not sub-state unconventional warfare is a viable US political military option. An examination of several interrelated topics was warranted to support or invalidate sub-state UW as a possible future political military approach. This associated research explored if there is an adequate theoretical basis to support a sub-state UW approach, which dependent variables must be present to successfully implement sub-state UW, and is a historical precedent for sub-state UW exists.

Throughout history, successful theorists and practitioners of UW have constructed political military approaches scaled and tailored to unique operational environments to coerce, disrupt, or overthrow a ruling regime. Francisco Espoz y Mina exploited the unique Navarrese national character to defeat Napoleon in Spain, while T.E. Lawrence sought to understand the Arab national character, which enabled him to organize and advise Arab guerrilla militias to defeat the Ottoman Empire. Lenin developed the *vanguard party* and Mao Zedong refined the *mass line* to raise the political consciousness of the masses and mold the people into a weapon with which to overthrow their respective governments. Vo Nguyen Giap accepted Mao Zedong's three-phased revolutionary approach, subsequently expanding and adapting the theoretical precept to Vietnam where conflict was regionally oriented. Giap moved fluidly between phases regionally, both forward and backward, based on environmental conditions although moving

backward between phases was anathema to Mao Zedong, and constituted defeat. Che Guevara proposed *foco* after successfully overthrowing Fulgencio Batista during the Cuban Revolution, believing it was possible to implement the approach throughout Latin America. Che ignored unique environmental conditions to his detriment, and in doing so demonstrated that regime change requires more than injecting political violence into unstable situations. Jamshid Gharajedaghi proposed the principle of *multidimensionality,* which partially explains the theoretical blending phenomenon apparent within and among UW theorists and practitioners, and refutes postulations that UW and COIN cannot be blended. Collectively, this analysis demonstrates a supportive theoretical basis for sub-state UW, and that there are likely three dependent variables necessary to successfully implement sub-state UW.

The three dependent variables that must be present in order for the US to implement sub-state UW are segmentation and fragmentation of sovereignty within a state, a supportive political context, and a viable indigenous partner force. Stathis Kalyvas introduced the concept of segmentation and fragmentation of sovereignty, proposing that civil war violence is a method by which insurgent or incumbent contests sovereignty by exerting control over the populace, and that each contested region can be measured using five discrete zones of control. Mao Zedong defined context in terms of time, place, and nature, while Robert Taber specifically addressed a supportive time for guerrilla warfare, and Martin Van Creveld provided case studies to illustrate places supportive for what he called *subconventional war*, and both he and Emile Simpson detailed considerations and complications arising from wars of the people. Carl von Clausewitz posited the notion that violence in war must link to political objectives, while Taber adapted Clausewitz's axiom to guerrilla warfare, additionally postulating that the guerrilla resistance must be capable of exhausting the opposition, and inspiring support from the populace.

The PRU in Vietnam and Brigade 2506 in the Bay of Pigs case studies tested the three dependent variables and confirmed US historical precedent for a sub-state UW political military

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approach. The PRUs executed a sub-state UW campaign against the VCI, considered an occupying force due to the obfuscated but direct connection between the VCI and DRVN during the Vietnam War. While fulfilling the three dependent variables for sub-state UW, the PRUs did not conduct their military operations in the absence of conventional forces. Therefore, the PRU case study does not demonstrate that sub-state UW is a political military approach that can be applied unilaterally. Brigade 2506 did not conduct sub-state UW against Fidel Castro's regime during the Bay of Pigs, with the US utilizing an approach similar to Che Guevara's *foco* strategy. While some of the dependent variables were present in Cuba in 1961, the CIA's ultimate strategy did not incorporate, or influence these variables, which had a role in *Operation Zapata's* failure.

Therefore, there is an adequate theoretical basis supportive of sub-state UW; a historical example of sub-state UW is CIA and USSF efforts with and through the PRU in South Vietnam; and segmentation or fragmentation of sovereignty, a supportive political context, and a viable partner force are three dependent variables necessary to implement sub-state UW. Thus, this monograph demonstrates that sub-state unconventional warfare is a viable US political military option. Sub-state UW must be scaled and tailored specifically to the operational environment, and when applied judiciously, can be utilized to oppose occupying powers like the Russian military in Transnistria, Crimea, Abkhazia, South Ossetia, or Nagorno Karabakh, and to combat non-state actors like ISIL in Iraq, Syria, and Libya by harnessing disenfranchised populations to disrupt, coerce, or overthrow regimes.

Areas for Further Research

During research for this monograph, other areas for research materialized that warrant further investigation. Documents detailing political military action in the 1980's continue to be declassified regularly, and may provide information regarding implementation of sub-state UW during that period. There are likely more than three dependent variables necessary to implement sub-state unconventional warfare. A more narrow focus on Project Phoenix, the PRUs, or on US

support for Hmong and Yao tribesman in Laos against the NVA during the Vietnam War may yield insight regarding additional variables. A more narrow focus on the Cuban Revolution, the Bay of Pigs, and on Che Guevara could provide discernment regarding insurgent elements in the Middle East who are trying to short-circuit the insurgency process through violence without adequately connecting those acts to political objectives. An in-depth examination of recent Russian aggression in peripheral nations that formerly fell under Soviet control and influence during the Cold War, may provide insight into limited sub-state UW resulting in the coercion or disruption of a government though occupation rather than the overthrow of the regime.

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